

## **INFORMATION TO USERS**

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

# **UMI**

A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL COUNSELOR IDENTITY**

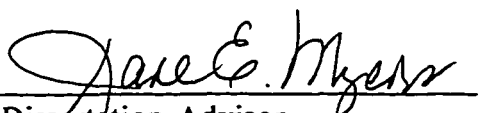
By

Pamelia Ellyn Brott

**A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of The Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Greensboro  
1996**

Approved by

  
Dissertation Advisor

**UMI Number: 9715628**

---

**UMI Microform 9715628**  
**Copyright 1997, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.**

**This microform edition is protected against unauthorized  
copying under Title 17, United States Code.**

---

**UMI**  
**300 North Zeeb Road**  
**Ann Arbor, MI 48103**

**BROTT, PAMELIA ELLYN, Ph.D. The Development of School Counselor Identity. (1996) Directed by Dr. Jane E. Myers. 256 pp.**

The purpose of this study was to propose a grounded theory that contributes to understanding school counselors' professional identity development. The study explored school counselors' professional interactions as defining experiences in their identity development.

The qualitative research design consisted of two studies using a purposeful sampling of school counselors (n=10). Data were collected through qualitative interviews, participant questionnaires, and observations in the schools. A set of rigorous coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) guided the data analyses to develop theoretically informed interpretations of the data.

The basic problem grounded in the data was the counselor's need for personal guidelines (i.e., self-conceptualization) as a meaning-making framework in carrying out the professional role. It was found that school counselors utilize personal guidelines through a process identified as the blending of influences involving four phases and related strategies: (a) structuring as defining and rating; (b) interacting as managing and responding; (c) distinguishing as advocating and accounting; and (d) evolving as sustaining and intertwining. Each strategy was described in terms of activities performed when carrying out the role. The process takes place as a dynamic interplay within the contexts, conditions, and phases when performing in the role. Involvement in the process was unique to each school counselor.

The substantive theory for the blending of influences process provides a framework from which to view the professional identity development of school counselors. The "blending of influences" describes the intertwining of the structural and personal perspectives that results in the personal guidelines followed by practitioners in making decisions for the delivery of programs and services to students in schools.

Implications from the study support professional multi-faceted growth throughout one's professional career (e.g., journal writing, mentoring, academics). Further, pre-professional training should focus on decision making and interacting (e.g., guest speakers, seminars with other educators in training). Also, internship guidelines should be developed for both host and university supervisors to provide a more meaningful bridge between training in and the practice of school counseling. The study supports standardized certification of school counselors. Future research should focus on testing and refining the theory through examining relationships within the theory, collecting data from multiple publics, and determining relationships between consequences of the process and the services provided to students.

## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the  
Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro.

Dissertation Advisor

*Jane E. Myers*

Committee Members

*Ken Smith*

*J. Hitt*

*L. Diane Borders*

October 9, 1996

Date of Acceptance by Committee

October 9, 1996

Date of Final Oral Examination

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my appreciation to those individuals who have made significant contributions to the dissertation. Acknowledgement is extended to my adviser, committee, participants, and husband for the integral role each has played in this process.

Words cannot adequately express the appreciation I have for my adviser, Dr. Jane Myers, who guided and supported me from the start to the finish of this project. Her expertise, vision, and encouragement were pivotal to my successfully completing this document.

My committee provided both individual and team guidance. The doctoral advisory/dissertation committee was comprised of Drs. Jane Myers, John Hattie, Penny Smith, Jim Fuller, and DiAnne Borders. Dr. Hattie seemed to know from the onset that a qualitative study would provide density to the project and a challenge to my research capabilities. Dr. Smith provided personal time for reflection and professional knowledge for clarification throughout the process. Dr. Fuller whose experience as a school counselor was a valuable resource, and Dr. Borders who agreed to assist me in finishing the process. The synergy of this committee was amazing and is gratefully acknowledged.

A very special acknowledgement is given to the ten school counselors who shared their stories with me. Their willingness to participate in the study was



necessary for the discovery of the blending of influences process and the completion of the dissertation.

Just as I cannot count the grains of sand on the beach, I cannot adequately express my deepest appreciation to Robin. His support helped me to endure the darkest moments and to celebrate the many successes. We did it!

I found that the dissertation process was not a "dark hole" into which I fell but rather a journey of multiple dimensions. And now I see that the journey has merely begun.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Rationale for the Study .....	2
Need for the Study .....	9
Purpose of the Study .....	11
Statement of the Problem .....	12
Research Questions .....	13
Definition of Terms .....	14
Organization of the Study .....	16
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	19
Counseling Challenges in the School Environment .....	21
Professionals in the School Environment .....	23
Development of a Profession .....	25
Definition of a Profession .....	25
Professional Identity of Practitioners .....	27
Process of Professional Identity Development .....	29
Counselor Professional Identity Development .....	32
School Counseling as a Profession .....	34
Historical Development of School Counseling .....	34
Directive Approach to School Counseling .....	35
Period of Transition in School Counseling .....	39
Developmental Approach to School Counseling .....	42
The Professional School Counselor .....	45
Training of School Counselors .....	45
Credentialing of School Counselors .....	48

	<b>Page</b>
School Counselor Role Confusion and Conflict Decisions . . . .	51
Role and Function of School Counselors . . . . .	52
Sources of Conflict for School Counselors . . . . .	55
Conflict Decision Model for School Counselors . . . . .	59
Summary . . . . .	63
<b>III. METHODOLOGY . . . . .</b>	<b>65</b>
Grounded Theory Approach to Qualitative Research . . . . .	68
Pilot Study . . . . .	71
Phase One . . . . .	72
Phase Two . . . . .	76
Data Collection . . . . .	82
Professional School Counselors . . . . .	83
Interviews . . . . .	84
Descriptive Questionnaire . . . . .	87
Participant Observation . . . . .	88
Use of Literature . . . . .	91
Data Analysis . . . . .	95
Open Coding . . . . .	96
Theoretical Sensitivity . . . . .	101
Axial Coding . . . . .	102
Selective Coding . . . . .	104
Credibility of Grounded Theory . . . . .	106
Ethical Considerations . . . . .	111
Summary . . . . .	114
<b>IV. FINDINGS . . . . .</b>	<b>117</b>
Participants . . . . .	118
Summary of the Interview Analyses . . . . .	121
Phase 3, Interview 1 (P301) . . . . .	121
Phase 3, Interview 2 (P302) . . . . .	130
Phase 3, Interview 3 (P303) . . . . .	138
Phase 3, Interview 4 (P304) . . . . .	145
Phase 3, Interview 5 (P305) . . . . .	152
Phase 3, Interview 6 (P306) . . . . .	161

	<b>Page</b>
Theoretical Categories .....	169
Context for Blending of Influences .....	170
Conditions for Blending of Influences .....	171
Experience .....	171
Number of Service Providers .....	173
Essentials .....	174
Phases for Blending of Influences .....	176
Structuring .....	178
Interacting .....	182
Distinguishing .....	187
Evolving .....	190
Core Category as the Blending of Influences .....	196
Substantive Theory for the Blending of Influences .....	200
Summary .....	205
<b>V. CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>207</b>
Summary .....	207
Credibility of the Study .....	209
Discussion .....	211
Implications of the Study .....	217
Practicing School Counselors .....	217
Training and Credentialing of School Counselors .....	220
Future Research .....	223
Conclusion .....	225
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW GUIDE .....</b>	<b>251</b>
<b>APPENDIX B. PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>APPENDIX C. CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN SUBJECT .....</b>	<b>255</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Study Two . . . . .	120
2	The Processes and Subprocesses in the Phases for the Blending of Influences . . . . .	177

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1      The Substantive Theory: Process for the Blending of Influences . . . .	204

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Schools are complex organizations that focus on students being taught and their success being assessed by standardized test scores and college admissions (Carlson & Lewis, 1993). In addition to academics, students are dealing with a variety of developmental issues associated with their cognitive, moral, and psychosocial functioning (Carlson & Lewis, 1993; Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & MacIver, 1993; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Takanishi, 1993; Thompson, 1992). Complicating this portrayal of students in schools is a multitude of cultural, social, economic, health, and educational issues (e.g., AIDS, divorce, drugs, pregnancy, suicide, violence) that students face on a daily basis (Neukrug, Barr, Hoffman, & Kaplan, 1993).

There are a variety of professionals in the schools who provide services for students who are struggling with these issues. These service providers are from diverse but related areas of training and are interrelated as well as reciprocally influential in shaping a student's development (Vacc, Bloss-Snyder, & Martin-Rainey, 1993). One of these professionals is the school counselor who, as a permanent staff member in the school, is in a unique position to coordinate professional services for students, to provide preventive as well as remedial and crisis interventions, and to consult with the various publics associated with the

school (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 1990; Baker, 1992; Coy, 1991; Myrick, 1993; O'Bryant, 1991; Wittmer, 1993).

Although school counselors seemingly have an important role in the school environment, the specifics of that role are often not clearly defined. One important determinant in the role of the school counselor is the principal. A comparison of training and responsibilities for principals and counselors seems to point to inevitable conflict (Kaplan, 1995). The process of decision making to resolve these conflicts may further illuminate differences between counselors and principals. More importantly, however, the investigation of this conflict resolution process can contribute to an understanding of the development of a professional school counselor identity. This identity serves as a frame of reference from which school counselors make sense of their work. This professional identity is the framework through which school counselors make choices and decisions that result in the daily delivery of professional services to students.

### **Rationale for the Study**

The profession of school counseling has evolved over nearly 100 years. When first initiated, the primary function of school counseling was viewed as providing classroom moral guidance lessons. More recently, school counselors are viewed as the providers of comprehensive developmental interventions. Further, school counseling has recently been defined as a distinct and separate profession (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). An examination of how professions



are defined and how professional identity develops is helpful in understanding more fully the evolution of school counseling as a profession.

The differentiation of a profession from an occupation has become theoretically consistent over the past 35 years. A profession is defined by features that are associated with a body of abstract knowledge and a service orientation (Goode, 1960). The characteristics of a profession most frequently cited in the literature are (a) specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge, (b) ethical standards, and (c) a strong identity with the field as a profession (Goode, 1960; Kerr, VonGlinow, & Schriesheim, 1977; McCully, 1962; Wilensky, 1964). People entering a profession experience change externally according to the requirements of the professional role and internally according to a subjective self-conceptualization associated with that role (McGowen & Hart, 1990). The internal or self-conceptualization (i.e., the sense of "a calling" to the profession) is individually based and is the basis for the development of a professional identity (Hall, 1987; Kerr, VonGlinow, & Schriesheim, 1977; McGowen & Hart, 1990; Watts, 1987).

Professional identity serves as a frame of reference from which professionals make sense of their work and, to some extent, their lives (Friedman & Kaslow, 1986). The concept of professional identity is not a final outcome, but continues to be related to one's professional activities and skills as one takes on new professional facets and sheds others (Bucher & Stelling, 1977). Issues of professional identity stem from professional socialization and development which

includes the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills that are required in a professional role, and the development of new values, attitudes, and self-identity components (Hall, 1987; McGowen & Hart, 1990).

Professional identity formation and development has been studied in numerous professions (e.g., teachers, psychoanalysts, psychologists) which have been reviewed in the literature (e.g., Kuzmic, 1994; Rosenbloom, 1992; Watts, 1987). Various conceptualizations of professional identity formation and development have been put forward: a process of socialization (Kuzmic, 1994); a process to "wed" theoretical knowledge with clinical experience (Rosenbloom, 1992); and a process of incorporating personal world views into professional role functioning as integrated professional values (Watts, 1987). What appears to be salient is the continual interplay between structural and attitudinal changes that result in a self-conceptualization as a "type" of professional (i.e., professional identity). This self-conceptualization serves as a frame of reference from which one carries out the professional role, makes significant professional decisions, and develops as a professional.

The literature on professional counselor development has identified similar processes involved in identity formation and development. These studies have focused on trainees, supervisors, and therapists-counselors (Bruss & Kopala, 1993; Hogan, 1964; Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Reising & Daniels, 1983; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992). Predominantly, the literature reports stage models of development and sequential increases in expertise of counselors over time.

The focus of the research has been on training of counselors with little attention paid to the professional working years beyond graduate school. Of particular interest is the study reported by Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992), who used qualitative research procedures to extract twenty themes of therapist-counselor development that suggest ". . . development involves a movement from reliance on external authority to reliance on internal authority, and. . . this process occurs through the individual's interaction with multiple sources of influence over a period of time" (p. 514). Whether this process is identical for professionals in the various specialties of counseling has not been determined. One of these specialties is school counseling, and the counseling literature is devoid of studies on the professional identity development of school counselors.

An understanding of the development of a professional school counselor identity begins with an awareness of the context of school counseling and school counselors. Until the last ten years, the profession of school counseling had assumed a reactive role to local and societal demands (Aubrey, 1977; Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). A review of the historical development of school counseling, which is discussed in-depth in Chapter II, illuminates the compounding of, rather than the clarifying of, counselor functions that has contributed to role conflict and confusion for school counselors as well as other professionals in the school environment (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Brown & Brown, 1975; Mayer, Butterworth, Komoto, & Benoit, 1983; Myrick, 1993; Paisley & Borders, 1995).

Important issues in the development of the school counseling profession have been the training and credentialing of school counselors (e.g., American School Counselor Association [ASCA] guidelines; Association for Counselor Education and Supervision [ACES] standards; Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP] standards). However, the majority of school counseling training programs are currently not accredited by CACREP (Hollis & Wantz, 1993). A national survey (Ibrahim & Thompson, 1982) in the early 1980s revealed that, although nearly all of the training programs for school counselors sampled adhered to the ACES standards for training in terms of curriculum, some areas in the core curriculum were weak, and a number of curricula improvements were sought. Therefore, it remains possible for school counselors to enter the profession with minimal or inadequate training (Myrick, 1993).

Although a national specialty certification for school counselors exists, each state continues to set the requirements for a specialty credential for school counselors entering the profession (Clawson, 1993; Paisley & Borders, 1995). The state requirements for certification vary greatly in the areas of teaching experience, coursework, and practica (Myrick, 1993; Paisley & Hubbard, 1989; Paisley & Borders, 1995). Therefore, the granting of standardized certificates for employment as school counselors continues to be handled by state governmental agencies (Myrick, 1993).

The counseling literature is saturated with studies and articles that examine the role and functions of school counselors (e.g., Carroll, 1993; Helms & Ibrahim, 1983, 1985; Shertzer & Stone, 1963; Stanciak, 1995; Wrenn, 1957). Despite numerous role statements by ASCA (1964, 1974, 1977, 1981, 1989, 1990), a proliferation of published surveys, and an abundance of theoretical articles, the discussion and controversy regarding the school counselor's role continues (Paisley & Borders, 1995). In spite of the best efforts of professional associations, accrediting bodies, and training programs to define the profession of school counseling, studies cited in the literature indicate that the actual functions of counselors in the schools do not always reflect what have been identified as the best practices in school counseling (Carroll, 1993; Hutchinson, Barrick, & Groves, 1986; Partin, 1993; Peer, 1985; Tennyson, Miller, Skovholt, & Williams, 1989).

Role confusion can be viewed as one source of occupational stress for school counselors. Other sources of dissonance that may result in stress include job expectations and demands, conflicts with administration and staff, dealing with crises, and demands from multiple publics (Amey, 1990; Kendrick, Chandler, & Hatcher, 1994; Moracco, Butcke, & McEwen, 1984; Sears & Navin, 1983). Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen (1984) in a national survey of ASCA members, concluded that occupational stress seemed to be a multidimensional concept that included lack of decision-making authority, nonprofessional duties, job overload, dissatisfying professional relationships with teachers and principals, and financial stress.

Considering the varied roles in which school counselors are expected to function, what or who are the major determinants of the counselor's specific roles in the school? One important source that defines the counselor's role in the school is the principal (Baker, 1992; Herr & Cramer, 1965; Knowles & Shertzer, 1965; Salmon, 1985). However, many principals have never taken a counseling and development course and are unfamiliar with counseling services (Lampe, 1985; Myrick, 1993). This has resulted in principals assigning duties to the school counselor that are not related to guidance and counseling, such as administrative and clerical tasks or disciplinary responsibilities (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Borders & Drury, 1992; Ponzo, 1989). Over time, these duties may become highly regarded by school personnel even though the duties do not relate to counseling (Baker, 1992; Murray, 1995).

Counselors and principals have separate as well as shared responsibilities in the schools. Cole (1991) compared counseling and administrative roles and concluded that each profession's different training and responsibilities made conflict inevitable. Moracco and Gray (1983) acknowledged the potential for conflict in their study by identifying Counselor-Principal Professional Relationships as one of six factors on their Counselor Occupational Stress Inventory. Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen (1984) found that the counselors' perception of administrators is that they do not understand, appreciate, or empathize with the counselors' efforts. The literature has led Kaplan (1995) to suggest that the potential for conflict between counselors and principals "is that

counselors and principals use different paradigms" (p. 261). Principals are responsibility comprehensive, learning focused, group centered, and action-and-concrete-results oriented; however, counselors are more responsibility limited, mental health focused, individual centered, and process oriented. These paradigms are the basis for decision making relative to the performance of one's job, and, for principals, the paradigm is the basis for expectations of how school counselors will perform their jobs. When conflicts occur, counselors must decide how best to respond to meet their own needs and the needs of students.

The theme that is repeated throughout the literature related to the professionalization of school counseling seems to be one of conflict or, more specifically, conflict decisions. School counselors' interactions with principals can involve conflict decisions. Reflecting on the decision process from the context of a conflict decision model (e.g., Janis & Mann, 1977) may shed light on the professional role of the school counselor. Given that conflict between principals and school counselors is inevitable, the process of conflict decisions may describe not only the differences between counselors and principals, but, more importantly, the development of an identity as school counselors manage professional conflicts and carry out their role as service providers to students.

### **Need for the Study**

Professional school counselors are front-line providers of mental health services to students in schools (Hollander, 1989; Kendrick, Chandler, & Hatcher, 1994). They are in a unique position to assist students in coping with

the challenges of a rapidly changing society, challenges which can have a critical effect on their academic performance (Carlson & Lewis, 1993; Carroll, 1993; Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & MacIver, 1993; Myrick, 1993; Neukrug, Barr, Hoffman, & Kaplan, 1993; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Takanishi, 1993; Thompson, 1992). However, as the profession has developed, the compounding of school counselors' role and functions have led to controversy and confusion which has been extensively documented in the literature (e.g., Carroll, 1993; Helms & Ibrahim, 1983, 1985; Shertzer & Stone, 1963; Stanciak, 1995; Wrenn, 1957). One important role determinant of the school counselor is the principal (Baker, 1992; Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Borders & Drury, 1992; Ponzo, 1989; Salmon, 1985). Inasmuch as there are differences in training and responsibilities between principals and counselors, conflict seems inevitable (Cole, 1991; Kaplan, 1995).

Given the lack of available information on the professional identity development of school counselors, a grounded theory is currently needed. The developmental growth of professional school counselors may have a profound influence on their role and functions as evidenced by a meaning-making framework when faced with conflict decisions. Professional identity serves as a frame of reference from which individuals make sense of their work and, to some extent, their lives (Friedman & Kaslow, 1986). By understanding the meaning-making framework in professional identity development, school counselors may be in a better position to determine their role and functions for serving students



and the school community. Further, counselor educators will be better able to provide training to students aspiring to become professional school counselors.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Strauss and Corbin (1990) described a qualitative design for building theory known as grounded theory. "Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 19). Grounded theory is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents as it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis pertaining to the phenomenon.

The purpose of this study was to propose a grounded theory that will contribute to an understanding of the school counselors' professional identity development. A model for professional school counselor identity development is not currently available in the literature. This study explored and conceptualized school counselors' professional interactions from a framework of conflict decisions as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity.

Based on the results from a pilot study that are reported in Chapter III and using qualitative techniques, the research study was undertaken to test the professional interactions of school counselors as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The grounded theory evolved from a naturalistic inquiry consisting of a series of interviews with

practicing school counselors, and the data was analyzed through a sequence of rigorous coding procedures. The emerging grounded theory contributes to the understanding of professional school counselor identity development and offers insight useful for further research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The literature about school counseling is largely descriptive of the historical context of the profession and empirically based on the role and functions of school counselors. Professional associations, accrediting bodies, and training programs have defined the profession of school counseling, although the literature indicates that what counselors actually do in the schools does not always reflect what have been identified as the best practices in school counseling. Further, the literature does not reflect research on the professional identity development of school counselors.

As a profession, we have not addressed the development of a professional school counselor identity. It appears that the development of a professional identity contributes to defining the role of school counselors which shapes the counseling programs and services provided to students. In providing appropriate programs and services, school counselors are involved in making decisions, and the interactions with principals seem to be particularly important. Viewing professional interactions with principals as defining experiences may shed light on the development of a professional school counselor identity.

The designation "Professional School Counselor" has been adopted through a resolution (ASCA, 1995) by the professional association membership as the title for individuals engaged in the practice of school counseling. However, in order for the title to reflect the identity of the professionals, insights must be developed, processes need to be discovered, and a theory proposed that addresses how the professional school counselor identity evolves.

### **Research Questions**

In accordance with qualitative methods and an inductive method of inquiry, a series of interviews addressed the question, "What is the conflict decision process utilized by school counselors when interacting with principals in the school?" Data collection, analysis, and theory stood in reciprocal relationship with each other throughout the research study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The purpose of the research was to understand and explain school counselors' professional interactions as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity that contribute to an emerging grounded theory.

The following six research questions were addressed in this study:

- (a) What factors determine the school counseling program?
- (b) Who is involved in determining the school counseling program?
- (c) How do school counselors make decisions about the school counseling program?

(d) What issues of conflict with principals have been dealt with by school counselors?

(e) What is the decision process used by school counselors when interacting with principals in professional conflict situations?

(f) In what ways do conflict decisions reflect the role of school counselors?

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined as they apply in this study:

**Conflict** is defined as problems, friction incidents, or disputes which may result in stress, anxiety, and pressure (Stack, 1977; Swisher, 1970).

**Conflict decisions** are part of a process that reflect the meeting of individual, developmental, and contextual factors and that take into account the influence of unpleasant emotions on intellectual judgments when human beings are required to make important choices on highly ego-involving issues (Janis & Mann, 1977).

**Function** refers to the various behaviors or tasks that are performed by an individual when carrying out one's part in a given situation (Myrick, 1993).

**Occupational stress** is a multidimensional concept that includes lack of decision-making authority, financial stress, nonprofessional duties, job overload, and dissatisfying professional relationships (Moracco, Butcke, & McEwen, 1984).

**Principal** is a school administrator who is certified by the state department of education, and who provides leadership to people and programs in the school;

the principal's model is defined as responsibility comprehensive, learning focused, group centered, and action-and-concrete-results oriented (Kaplan, 1995).

**Profession** is an occupation that has acquired several features or traits derived from the core characteristics of specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge and a service orientation (Goode, 1960). The features most frequently cited in the literature are (a) specialized training in an abstract body of knowledge, (b) ethical standards, and (c) a strong identity with the field as a profession (Goode, 1960; Kerr, VonGlinow, & Schriesheim, 1977; McCully, 1962; Wilensky, 1964).

**Professional** is an individual who has entered a profession and possesses the attributes that are structural, such as formal education and entrance requirements for entry into the profession, and attitudinal, such as a sense of "a calling" of the person to the field which is individually based (McGowen & Hart, 1990).

**Professional identity** is the perception of oneself as a particular type of professional that serves as a frame of reference from which professionals make sense of their work and, to some extent, their lives (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Friedman & Kaslow, 1986). The development of this identity is a part of the process of becoming a professional which continues to be related to one's professional activities and skills as one takes on new facets and sheds others (Bucher & Stelling, 1977).

**Professional identity development** is the movement from reliance on external authority to reliance on internal authority, and is a "process [that] occurs through the individual's interaction with multiple sources of influence over a long period of time" (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992, p. 514).

**Role** refers to the part that one plays in a given situation (Myrick, 1993).

**School counseling** is a specialty area of the counseling profession that is designed to facilitate self-understanding and self-development through individual and small group activities involving a professional relationship between a trained school counselor, a student, and significant others in the student's life (CACREP, 1994).

**School counselor** is a credentialed professional with specialized graduate training in counseling and development who organizes his or her work schedule around the basic approaches of counseling, guidance, consultation, and coordination incorporating a variety of interventions that promote personal growth (ASCA, 1995; Coy, 1991; Myrick, 1993; O'Bryant, 1991; Wittmer, 1993). For the purposes of this study, the school counselor's model is responsibility limited, mental health focused, individual centered, and process oriented (Kaplan, 1995).

### **Organization of the Study**

The research proposal is presented in the first three chapters with each chapter serving a distinct purpose. Chapter I is an introduction to the profession

of school counseling and the conflicts that are shaping the identity of the professional school counselor.

In Chapter II, a review of the literature is addressed in five sections that is summarized at the end of the chapter. The first section presents an overview of the counseling challenges in the school environment. The second section introduces the professionals in the school environment as a multi-disciplinary team. The third section reviews the development of a profession and includes the following: definition of a profession, professional identity, process of professional identity development, and counselor professional identity development. Given the understanding of the development of a profession, section four presents school counseling as a profession through a review of the historical development of school counseling and the training and credentialing of school counselors. The fifth section focuses on the school counselor's role confusion and conflict decisions. This final section includes a process framework for viewing school counselors' professional interactions that involve conflict decisions. A summary of the review of the literature concludes the chapter.

Chapter III presents details about the methodology for this study. A description of the grounded theory approach to qualitative research, the results of a pilot study, data collection, data analysis, credibility of grounded theory, and ethical considerations are included. The chapter concludes with a summary of the methodology.

Chapter IV reports the findings from the second study and is divided into four sections. The first section is a description of the participants. Section two is a summary of the interview analyses. The third section includes descriptions of the theoretical categories (i.e., context, conditions, phases) and the core category for the blending of influences process. The final section presents the substantive theory as a process for the blending of influences.

In Chapter V, conclusions from the study are presented in five sections. The chapter begins with a summary of the study. Section two is a discussion of the credibility of the study. The third section is a discussion of the findings from the study. In the fourth section, implications of the study for practicing school counselors, training and credentialing of schools counselors, and future research are discussed. The final section provides a conclusion to the chapter and to the study.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

School-age children are a population at risk. They are living in a rapidly changing and unsure world: Traditional family support systems are often missing, violence is widespread, drugs are widely accessible, divorce is commonplace, sexuality is confused, the incidence of AIDS is growing, and teenage pregnancy continues to rise (Killin & Williams, 1995). These dramatic changes, in both family composition and social themes in the past 20 years, have placed demands on the schools to provide mental and physical health services as well as to meet the traditional educational needs of the students (Carroll, 1993). Within the school environment there are a number of professionals who provide services for meeting the needs of students as they struggle with these issues. One of these service providers is the professional school counselor.

Professional school counselors are the front-line providers of mental health services to school-age children (Hollander, 1989; Kendrick, Chandler, & Hatcher, 1994). The school counseling profession has evolved beyond the traditional guidance perspective with considerable change taking place in recent years in response to a rapidly changing world (Carroll, 1993). Today, school counselors are "challenged by helping relationships that reach beyond vocational and education decisions" (Schmidt, 1984, p. 383). The evolving role of the

professional school counselor, expansion of counseling services to all grade levels in schools, and improved counselor education programs demonstrate a recognition that counseling programs contribute to the educational process in schools by focusing on the mental health needs of school-age children (Schmidt, 1984).

There is some evidence, as noted in Chapter I, that counselor services are mediated by the role perceptions of both the school counselor and other professionals in the school environment. One important determinant of the counselor's role in the school is the principal (Baker, 1992; Herr & Cramer, 1965; Knowles & Shertzer, 1965; Salmon, 1985). However, many principals are unaware of the training and professionalism of school counselors, and given the different "model" from which principals operate, conflict is inevitable (Cole, 1991; Kaplan, 1995; Lampe, 1985; Moracco, Butcke, & McEwen, 1984; Myrick, 1993). How school counselors deal with this conflict may be a part of a decision making process (i.e., conflict decisions) that is mediated by their perceived role. Therefore, insight into the development of a professional school counselor identity may be gained through a study of school counselors' interactions with principals in conflict decision situations.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore and discuss the literature from multiple sources that will contribute to an understanding of professional school counselors and their role confusion and controversy which have led to conflicts. The first section of the chapter is an introduction to the students and problems that are the counseling challenges in the school environment and to the

professionals who are there to provide services. The second section provides an overview of the various professionals working in the schools and highlights the uniqueness of the professional school counselor as well as the factors underlying the evolution of school counseling as a profession. The third section of this chapter examines the development of a profession, professional identity of practitioners, and the process of professional identity development. The following section is an in-depth look at school counseling as a profession that traces the historical development from the late 1890s to the contemporary developmental school counseling model, and defines the professional school counselor from the perspectives of training and credentialing. The final section delineates the professional school counselor role confusion and controversy from the viewpoint of conflicts and decision making processes in the school environment. The literature review begins with a look at the counseling challenges in the school environment.

### **Counseling Challenges in the School Environment**

In 1993, there were 48.4 million students enrolled in the nation's public schools (U.S. Census, 1995, p. 156). These children are concurrently faced with a myriad of complex cultural, social, economic, and educational challenges (Neukrug, Barr, Hoffman, & Kaplan, 1993). On a daily basis, 100,000 children are homeless, nearly 3,000 children see their parents divorce, and six teenagers commit suicide (Children's Defense Fund, 1990).

The dramatic changes that have occurred in both family composition and social themes in the last 20 years have placed significant demands on schools (Carroll, 1993; Myrick, 1993). Today's schools are expected to meet traditional educational needs as well as to provide health education, preschool and after-school day care, and referrals for mental and physical health concerns (Carroll, 1993). Further, the multitude of issues that children face on a daily basis may manifest as student problems that are disruptive of the learning process in the schools (Myrick, 1993). Elkind (1990) contended that schools of the future will move into a leadership role in dealing with the family and emotional problems of their students.

Schools are complex organizations that focus on "students learning and achieving in the classroom" (Kaplan, 1995, p. 266) which is generally measured by standardized test scores and college admissions (Carlson & Lewis, 1993). Notwithstanding the academics, students are dealing with a multitude of issues that are associated with the developmental stages of life such as cognitive, moral, psychosocial, and social learning processes (Carlson & Lewis, 1993; Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & MacIver, 1993; Paisley & Hubbard, 1994; Takanishi, 1993; Thompson, 1992). The social and psychological issues that students face indicate that there is a need for developmental as well as remedial interventions within the school setting (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993).

Fortunately, there are professionals within the school system who provide services for students who are struggling with these issues (Vacc, Bloss-Snyder, & Martin-Rainey, 1993). One of these service providers is the school counselor, a credentialed professional with specialized graduate training in counseling and development.

### **Professionals in the School Environment**

Within the school system, there is a multi-disciplinary team of professionals that provides services for meeting the needs of students as they struggle with psychological and social challenges. These service providers are from diverse but related areas of training, and include the school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker, and school counselor. The advantages of a multi-disciplinary team approach are that professionals no longer intentionally or unintentionally isolate themselves from each other and that these specialists are inter-related and reciprocally influential in shaping a child's development (Vacc, Bloss-Snyder, & Martin-Rainey, 1993).

The role of each service provider can be viewed as follows: The school nurse assesses and monitors the physical health needs of students; the school psychologist conducts the testing and assessment program for students to determine individual educational needs; the school social worker conducts home visits to determine the physical needs of students; the school counselor provides expertise and direction on understanding appropriate developmental issues and needs of students by implementing counseling strategies through individual and

group settings, and by incorporating coordination and consultation strategies (Myrick, 1993; Vacc, Bloss-Snyder, Martin-Rainey, 1993). The school counselor, as a permanent staff member in the school, is in a unique position to coordinate the various professional services for students. "This is especially appropriate given their background in communication skills, group work, and overall understanding of the school environment" (Vacc, Bloss-Snyder, Martin-Rainey, 1993, p. 202).

School counselors are credentialed professionals who organize their work schedules around the basic approaches of counseling, guidance, consultation, and coordination (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 1995). Professional school counselors implement comprehensive developmental counseling programs and provide services to all grade levels in the school community by incorporating a variety of interventions that promote personal growth (Coy, 1991; Myrick, 1993; O'Bryant, 1991; Wittmer, 1993). The role of the school counselor in a comprehensive developmental counseling program is to develop strategies to help students cope with the challenges of a rapidly changing society which can have a critical effect on their academic performance (Coy, 1991).

School counseling as a profession has evolved over nearly 100 years from its inception as the delivery of moral guidance lessons to the current comprehensive developmental school counseling model (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). The profession has been responsive to the demands of

society in defining its role in the school (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). To understand more fully the evolution of school counseling as a profession, it is helpful to examine the definition of a profession and the dynamics of professional identity development.

### **Development of a Profession**

Goode (1960) suggested that "we should think of occupations as falling somewhere along a continuum of professionalism, the continuum being made up of common traits" (p. 903). As an occupation becomes more professionalized, it acquires several features along this continuum (Goode, 1960; Kerr, VonGlinow, & Schriesheim, 1977). In this section, a definition of a profession, professional identity of practitioners, the process of professional identity development, and counselor professional identity development are discussed as factors contributing to our understanding of how professions develop.

### **Definition of a Profession**

Conditions of theoretical importance from which a profession can be differentiated from an occupation have become consistent over the past 35 years. Goode (1960) extracted two core characteristics from the most commonly cited definitions which characterize a profession: (a) a prolonged specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge, and (b) a collectivity or service orientation. As an occupation becomes more professionalized, it acquires several features or traits derived from these two core characteristics. The features most frequently repeated in the literature which define the evolution of a profession are

(a) specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge, (b) ethical standards, and (c) a strong identity with the field as a profession (Goode, 1960; Kerr, Von Glinow, & Schriesheim, 1977; McCully, 1962; Wilensky, 1964).

A number of professions have been investigated and reported in the literature. These investigations have sought to define each profession based on specialized training, ethical standards, and identity with the field as a profession. Examples of professions reviewed in the literature include physicians (Bloom, 1963; Coombs, 1979; Freidson, 1970), nurses (Cohen, 1981), psychologists (Krauskopf, Thoreson, & McAleer, 1972; Schoen, 1989), psychoanalysts (Rosenbloom, 1992), social workers (Enoch, 1989), and counselors (Reising & Daniels, 1983; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992).

The contention that counseling is a profession has evolved during the last 30 years. McCully (1962) recognized the goal for counseling to achieve a professional status with identifiable conditions or features. His contention was that counseling needed to be compared objectively with established criteria for a profession because "it takes more than verbal reiteration to make a profession" (McCully & Miller, 1969, p. 17). Twenty years later, Brown and Pate (1983) saw progress in the professionalization of counseling but felt that the process was far from complete. The true test of whether counseling was a profession was the historic legal case of John I. Weldon vs. Virginia State Board of Psychologist Examiners in 1972. The decision of the courts was that the profession of counseling was a distinct and separate entity from other mental health



professions. In summarizing the status of the field, Vacc and Loesch (1987) stated that counseling was a profession and gave corroborating evidence in their text, Counseling as a Profession.

The features that define a profession have been consistently applied to various professions over the years. The features that characterize a profession include the structure of the role through specialized training in a body of abstract knowledge and ethical standards, as well as the attitude of the practitioner through a collectivity or service orientation. Practitioners who are involved in a profession develop an identity as part of the process of becoming a professional. The professional identity of practitioners is related to one's professional activities and skills.

### **Professional Identity of Practitioners**

Professional identity can be defined as the perception of oneself as a particular type of professional (Bucher & Stelling, 1977). Professional identity serves as a frame of reference from which professionals make sense of their work and, to some extent, their lives (Friedman & Kaslow, 1986).

Studies have shown that becoming a professional occurs on two levels (Hall, 1968; Kerr, VonGlinow, & Schriesheim, 1977). These two levels are (a) structural, such as formal educational and entrance requirements for entry into the profession, and (b) attitudinal, such as the individual's sense of "a calling" to the field (Hall, 1968). Stated another way, people entering a profession experience change externally, which is in the requirements of the specific career

role, and internally, which is in the subjective self-conceptualization associated with that role (McGowen & Hart, 1990).

Issues of professional identity stem from professional socialization and development (McGowen & Hart, 1990). Professional socialization and development have been defined as a social learning process that includes the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills that are required in a professional role and the development of new values, attitudes, and self-identity components (Hall, 1987; McGowen & Hart, 1990; Watts, 1987).

Hall's (1987) career spectrum model divides professional socialization into three areas: microlevel or individual processes, person-environment interaction processes, and macrolevel or institutional processes. Another view of professional socialization has been proposed by Watts (1987) and is also a tripartite model: entry orientation, the socialization phase, and professional outcome. Watts (1987) in his investigation of professional identity formation in Black clinical psychology students found that professional values serve to integrate all other components of professional identity (e.g., special knowledge, peer interaction, role modeling, specific professional roles, and career goals).

These views of professional socialization are applicable to the present study of professional identity development. In each model, professional socialization is described as an active process. The development of a professional identity is part of the process of becoming a professional and is in no sense a final outcome. The professional identity of practitioners is not static and

immutable, but continues to be related to one's professional activities and skills as one takes on new facets and sheds others (Bucher & Stelling, 1977).

### **Process of Professional Identity Development**

The process of professional growth and development has been reported in the literature for a number of professions, such as teachers, clinical psychologists, counseling psychologists, and psychoanalysts (Friedman & Kaslow, 1986; Kuzmic, 1994; McGowen & Hart, 1990; Rosenbloom, 1992; Watts, 1987). In general, the concept of professional growth and development has been viewed from the perspectives of training, person-environment fit, and maturation. A representative sample from these perspectives has been selected for inclusion in this review to illustrate the dynamics of the professional development process.

The perspective of professional growth and development during training has been viewed as similar to human development. Parallels have been drawn between the professional development of psychotherapists during training and individual human development (Bruss & Kopala, 1993; Eckler-Hart, 1987; Ford, 1963; Friedman & Kaslow, 1986). How the individual copes with adjustment to the training environment is similar to how an infant evolves during the initial stages of life. From this perspective, training may be viewed in terms of a professional infancy (Bruss & Kopala, 1993; Eckler-Hart, 1987). The role of the supervisor in training is to nurture and promote growth, in a role similar to that of a parent (Ford, 1963; Friedman & Kaslow, 1986). Throughout the training program, healthy development of the professional identity is fostered by the

supervisor being sensitive to students' needs, establishing a climate of mutual respect, developing supportive introjects, establishing an explicit evaluation process, socializing students into the profession, and encouraging both physical and mental well-being (Bruss & Kopala, 1993).

The perspective of person-environment fit has been extensively studied in the vocational behavior literature (Blau, 1987; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Hackett, Lent, & Greenhaus, 1991; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989; Moos, 1987; Smart, Elton, & McLaughlin, 1986). The best known approaches to person-environment fit have been Holland's (1985) typological theory and the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Motivational psychology operationalizes person-environment fit in terms of behavior determinants (i.e., how an individual feels, behaves, or reacts) and environmental determinants (i.e., what the environment can do for an individual to facilitate or hinder the fulfillment of needs or the accomplishment of goals) (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Hall & Lindzey, 1970; Murray, 1938). Person-environment fit has been shown to have positive outcome implications for job involvement (Blau, 1987), job satisfaction and tenure (Bretz & Judge, 1994), organizational commitment (Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989), individual health and adaptation (Moos, 1987), and work attitudes (Smart, Elton, & McLaughlin, 1986). Current research on the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) has focused on the dynamic interaction between individuals and their occupational environments (Lawson, 1993). The theoretical foundations and the related research suggest that

individuals will seek out, find contentment, and thrive in environments that support their specific preferences (Bretz & Judge, 1994). In other words, those who fit will thrive.

The perspective of molding a secure professional identity is a developmental process of maturation (Kuzmic, 1994; Rosenbloom, 1992). After the beginning practitioner enters the profession, there are a number of initial losses (e.g., supervisors, trainers, peers) which are likely to affect both the comfort level of one's work as well as the quality of one's professional functioning. Along with the losses, the new practitioner struggles to develop the sort of "work ego" which will enable the practitioner to make sense of the profession (Rosenbloom, 1992). This may be seen as the integration of theory and practice. Kuzmic (1994) spoke of the "process of becoming" as the reflective perspective that is an inner understanding from which new experiences are handled. Rosenbloom (1992) spoke of identity formation and development as the experiences which help the practitioner wed theory with reality in the direction of greater flexibility and openness.

Professional identity development is an individual maturation process that begins during one's training for the profession, evolves during entry into the profession, and continues to develop as the practitioner identifies with the profession. It is through an inner understanding that each individual interprets and responds to a variety of professional experiences.

### **Counselor Professional Identity Development**

The profession of counseling has been investigated in relation to the development of its trainees and practitioners. Counselor development has been a topic in the literature focusing on supervision, training, and, professional practice (Hogan, 1964; Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Reising & Daniels, 1983; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992).

Hogan's (1964) model of counselor development and supervision is seminal in that numerous authors have adopted or reconceptualized his basic ideas (Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Stoltenberg, 1981). This model depicts counselors-in-training (i.e., supervisees) as struggling with different issues at each of four levels of development. Supervisees move from (a) an anxious, dependent, method-bound, naive stance, (b) through a process of dependency-autonomy conflict characterized by skill acquisition and self-discovery, (c) into a level of conditional dependency with a developing counselor identity, and (d) eventually leading to more accurate self-perceptions and to responsible independence and creativity in one's counseling work as a master counselor (Hogan, 1964).

The results of an empirical study by Reising and Daniels (1983) based on Hogan's (1964) model indicate that counselor development is a "complex rather than simple process" (p. 239) involving issues of anxiety and doubt, independence, method and skills training, work validation, commitment ambivalence, and respectful confrontation. One implication from this study was that the identified issues are organized for each individual counselor as a gradual process of

resolution of some issues while others emerge and become salient (Reising & Daniels, 1983).

Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews and qualitative research procedures, Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992) developed a stage model of counselor development and extracted themes of therapist-counselor development. A primary theme from this study was that professional development leads to "professional individuation" which was defined as the increasingly higher order integration of the professional self and the personal self. The major method of professional development is the continuous reflection of significant professional interactions. Another important theme was that the development of knowledge is a movement from a level of received knowledge (i.e., external) to a higher level of constructed knowledge (i.e., internal). The themes from this study suggest that the process of development "involves a movement from reliance on external authority to reliance on internal authority and that this process occurs through the individual's interaction with multiple sources of influence over a period of time" (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992, p. 514).

Based on the literature cited, the professional identity development of counseling practitioners appears to be an individual process that can be understood in terms of a comprehensive model. The counseling professional moves from an external, received- knowledge authority to an internal, constructed-knowledge authority, or, stated another way, a movement from naive dependence to responsible independence.

Presently, the American Counseling Association (ACA) recognizes eight specialties: addictions counseling, career counseling, college counseling, gerontological counseling, marriage and family counseling, mental health counseling, rehabilitation counseling, and school counseling (Myers, 1995). As a specialty area of the counseling profession, school counseling can be viewed within the present discussion of professions and professional identity development.

### **School Counseling as a Profession**

In order to understand the context of school counseling and school counselors, it is helpful to review the profession as it has evolved over the past 100 years. The recognition of the importance of school counseling as a part of the total educational program has evolved. However, a closer look at the historical development of school counseling will illuminate the compounding of rather than the clarifying of counselor functions which has led to role conflict and confusion for school counselors.

### **Historical Development of School Counseling**

School counseling began as a response to the upheaval and turmoil created by the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution and "the abrupt shift from a self-sufficient and agrarian society to a nation dependent on industry and the mass production of goods" (Aubrey, 1977, p. 288). The history of school counseling can be seen as a series of reactions to local needs and, in many cases, to influences outside of education (Aubrey, 1977; Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993).



School counseling has evolved from a directive approach with a focus on teaching lessons, psychometric measurement, and administrative tasks, to a developmental approach with a focus on counseling, coordinating, and consulting.

**Directive approach to school counseling.** A systemized approach to school guidance first appeared in 1898 when Jesse Davis, a high school principal in Michigan, introduced vocational and moral guidance as a curricular component (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). The program consisted of one period per week set aside in English composition classes with the goals to help high school students better understand their own character, to emulate good role models, and to develop into socially responsible workers (Baker, 1992). Other pioneers (e.g., David S. Hill, Anna Y. Reed, Eli W. Weaver) founded their guidance services in response to different local needs such as making students employable, helping them find suitable employment, and responding to their individual differences (Baker, 1992; Rockwell & Rothney, 1961).

At the turn of the century, with the influx of immigrants into the United States and the migration of Americans into urban areas, there was a need to provide occupational information and to help individuals comprehend and utilize this information to make occupational choices (Baker, 1992). Frank Parsons founded the Vocational Bureau of Boston in 1908 and authored a book, Choosing a Vocation (1909), in response to the need for occupational information for out-of-school youth. Later, Parsons emphasized the measurement of individual

aptitude and personality traits which significantly influenced the role of the guidance "counselor" as a test administrator.

During this time, vocational guidance programs were being introduced in a few metropolitan school districts to encourage students to plan for jobs in the workforce and for participation in society (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993).

Vocational courses were offered in some universities, and the federal government passed legislation (e.g., George-Reed Act of 1919; Smith-Hughes Act of 1917) that subsidized vocational education and teacher training (Baker, 1992). In 1913, Davis helped form the first professional guidance association known as the National Vocational Guidance Association (Myrick, 1993).

It was also during this time that the psychometric movement led to the use of psychometric principles and techniques in applied settings such as in the schools and in the military (Baker, 1992). The use of reliability theory and test validity as well as standardized psychometric instruments enhanced scholarly efforts of academicians and researchers. The use of mental ability measurement (i.e., intelligence testing) to classify students for educational instruction popularized the idea of using psychometric principles to solve practical problems.

With the entry of the United States into World War I in 1917, the federal government needed to classify millions of young men eligible for the military. Two major tests were developed for this purpose, the Army Alpha, a paper-and-pencil achievement test, and the Army Beta, a non-verbal intelligence test, both of which were administered in a group setting (Baker, 1992). The success of

group testing for the military popularized the idea of using group testing in education. In vocational guidance, the use of group tests was further developed as a scientific means for determining a person's interests, strengths, and limitations (Baker, 1992).

The secondary school counseling programs that emerged in the 1920s emphasized student discipline, attendance, and guidance (Baker, 1992; Gibson & Mitchell, 1986). Compulsory school attendance increased the number of students who were unsure of their future plans and many had difficulty adjusting to the school environment. Counseling became a service to help students cope with these struggles by providing assistance in selecting school subjects, colleges, and vocational schools (Baker, 1992; Proctor, 1925). In addition to the guidance service, secondary school counselors acquired some administrative responsibilities, became responsive to the day-to-day requests of the school administrators, and were often times identified as administrators (Baker, 1992; Shaw, 1973).

During the 1920s and 1930s, even greater impetus was given to individual testing in schools, industry, and the military (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). The Great Depression was an era of high unemployment for both out-of-school youth and adults, and the emphasis during this era was placed upon individual assessment and ways of making the best use of worker skills and aptitudes (Myrick, 1993; Williamson, 1950). At about this time, state guidance directors were appointed to develop and coordinate testing programs in the schools, and

educators began to use the term "counseling" rather than "guidance" (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993).

The Parsonian model of directive counseling gave a scientific flavor to vocational guidance by employing techniques of testing and counseling. Psychometric measurement was used to give rigor and respectability to the diagnostic phase, and counseling was used to enhance the placement phase. The counselor was seen as the key figure in the counseling process who would take the responsibility for leading the counselee. The directive model of counseling was "fully in keeping with a time in history . . . marked by a high degree of rigidity and authoritarianism" (Aubrey, 1977, p. 291). This model placed the counselor in a role not unlike that of a teacher.

Early theories of vocational choice were severely tested during the first half of the twentieth century. Nationwide unemployment and poverty for alarming proportions of the population in the 1930s and the early 1940s would not improve until the early 1940s at the cost of a world war. A rapid increase in the population of the United States and a doubling of the labor force would also test the applicability of the early theories. Finally, vocational guidance had to deal with the increased availability of free public education and a dramatic increase in the number of women entering the labor force. Collectively these demands were overwhelming and "the early extensions of the Parsonian model simply too weak and impotent to deal with the demands of the time" (Aubrey, 1977, p. 291).

World War II created a demand for standardized testing as a means for the screening and placement of draftees (Myrick, 1993). The schools also began to use standardized tests (e.g., Scholastic Aptitude Test) to determine a student's admission to colleges and universities (Wittmer, 1993). Until the late 1940s, school counseling had a relatively narrow focus with goals directed toward vocational guidance, students adjusting to their environment, and administrative duties. The dominant school counseling model during this era was directive or counselor-centered based on the Parsonian triad of diagnosis, information, and placement (Aubrey, 1977).

Following World War II, there was an increasing desire for personal freedom and self-determination abetted by the newly found affluence, a full employment market, the opportunities offered to returning veterans, and a general extension of education to all individuals (Aubrey, 1977; Baker, 1992). The issue of personal freedom was a determiner in changing the dominant counseling approach. In a classic study of counselors, Armor (1969) raised the question whether counselors for decades were authoritarian in methodology in order to protect the best interests of a rapidly growing industrial society with a high need for a correct matching of worker and job.

**Period of transition in school counseling.** The inadequacy of early counseling models had been pointed out in the 1930s by a number of clinical psychologists, social psychologists, and psychotherapists (Aubrey, 1977).

Breakthroughs occurred during World War II which influenced the direction of

counseling through changes in university curricula and in the training of those responsible for the preparation of counselors. Even more dramatic was the emergence of new models and techniques related to the practice of counseling. The prime mover in changing the course and direction of the entire counseling movement in the 1940s was Carl Rogers (Aubrey, 1977).

The writings of Carl Rogers (1942, 1951, 1961) presented a nonmedical approach to counseling, and his ideas transferred the focus of counseling away from problems and onto the individuals receiving counseling (Baker, 1992). Individual counseling had emerged as the dominant guidance service in the 1930s and 1940s and was the central service in secondary school guidance (Baker, 1992; Smith, 1955). Rogers' influence moved school counselors away from being highly directive in their approach to being more client-centered.

The launching of Sputnik in 1957 by the U.S.S.R. sparked the rapid development of school guidance and counseling services (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). The perceived threat of Soviet educational superiority in math and science fueled the United States toward passing the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, which provided funds for both the enhancement of school counseling programs and the preparation of school counselors (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). The NDEA legislation brought counseling and counselors to the forefront as their role was to recruit bright youth for college and careers in math and science (Wittmer, 1993). Between 1958 and 1964, the number of secondary school counselors trained nearly tripled (Gibson &

Mitchell, 1986). From a legislative standpoint, credibility was given to school counseling (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993).

During this time, the legislative focus for school counselors was to identify and encourage academically talented youths (i.e., aptitude in math and science) in attending college and to guide these youths into strategic careers (Baker, 1992; Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993). However, within the schools, the emphasis of school counseling was placed on non-guidance activities which were typically clerical and administrative duties (Wittmer, 1993). This may be attributed to the training of school counselors that occurred in collegiate programs where there had been insufficient preparation for the enrollment influx brought about by the NDEA passage. In many states, four or five graduate courses were considered sufficient preparation to apply for state certification as a school counselor (Myrick, 1993). Additionally, most states required classroom teaching experience for school counselor certification which restricted entry into the profession to teachers. Without adequate preparation and with ill-defined goals for school counseling, many school counselors saw the position as a step toward becoming a building principal and, therefore, performed in a quasi-administrative role (Myrick, 1993; Wittmer, 1993).

The narrow focus on a few students (i.e., aptitudes in math and science) was eventually challenged, and recommendations were made for school guidance and counseling to be available to all students (Conant, 1959; Wrenn, 1962). Wrenn's (1962) report, The Counselor in a Changing World, was the result of

The Commission on Guidance established by the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) to study the role and function of school counselors, to review the preparation of school counselors, and to make recommendations for school counseling (Myrick, 1993). This report recommended individual and group counseling to students as well as consultation to parents and teachers and placed an emphasis on student developmental needs. It was evident that school counseling services were designed to maximize student potential by emphasizing personal growth, self-determination, and self-responsibility. A shift toward developmental guidance and counseling had begun as other authors were writing about developmental rather than remedial goals (Baker, 1992; Dinkmeyer, 1967; Myrick, 1993; Shaw, 1973; Zaccaria, 1969).

In 1964, the federal government extended the NDEA legislation through amendments to support the development and training of elementary school counselors (Myrick, 1993). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (Titles I and III) provided additional support for elementary school guidance (Myrick, 1993). Thus began the shift of counseling services to all students from elementary through high school (Baker, 1992).

**Developmental approach to school counseling.** The developmental movement brought about the reconceptualization of school counseling. As the 1970s approached, the concept of a comprehensive delivery system to promote individual awareness, growth, and development resulted in a shift in both the training as well as the role and function of school counselors (Wittmer, 1993).



The expanded emphasis on services for all students (i.e., elementary as well as secondary), the increased number of professionals being trained and employed, and the reconceptualized model of school counseling were significant benchmarks in the growth and development of the school counseling profession (Baker, 1992).

However, declining school enrollments and national economic problems in the 1970s and 1980s led to a reduction of personnel in many school districts (Baker, 1992). A number of school counseling positions were eliminated and fewer jobs were available for newly trained school counselors. It was also during this time that the developmental guidance approach gained momentum, and several themes about the appropriate role for school counselors were advanced (Baker, 1992; Menacker, 1974, 1976).

The first theme was the importance to reach all students with an emphasis on self-understanding and adjustment using an approach that stressed consultation and collaboration (Baker, 1992). Another theme was personal development for students using psychologically based curriculum interventions (Mosher & Sprinthall, 1970). A third theme was the importance of work and careers to healthy human adjustment, and the advocates of career education recommended integrating general and vocational education, instruction, and guidance around a career development focus from kindergarten through the twelfth grade (Hoyt, Evans, Mackin, & Mangum, 1974).

The services or functions of school counselors were to be provided as needed, ranging from primary prevention to diagnosis and therapy (APGA, 1969;

Keat, 1974; Shaw, 1973). However, the field of school counseling still lacked a unifying theme, and training programs ranged from the newer activist, developmental service-oriented theme to the remnants of the directive, administrative-oriented theme (Baker, 1992).

The leaders in the reconceptualization of school counseling as a comprehensive developmental program were influential in the development of the 1990 ASCA role statement for school counselors that defined developmental guidance programs (e.g., Gysbers, Henderson, Myrick). These components are reflected in the widespread consensus as to the desired services of school counseling programs. Borders and Drury (1992) extracted four core principles that characterize effective programs: (a) an independent educational program that is comprehensive, purposeful, and sequential; (b) an integrative program that is infused into all areas of the curriculum, that is central to teaching and learning in the schools, and that involves all school staff; (c) a developmental program that is based on human development theories; and (d) an equitable program that serves all students equally.

The specialty of school counseling within the profession of counseling continues to evolve as a result of educational, social, economic, and political influences (Paisley & Borders, 1995). From the beginnings in the late 1890s as a directive approach to vocational guidance to the emergence as a developmental approach, the profession of school counseling has moved toward a wellness, proactive, preventive approach to providing student services. Current legislation

(e.g., School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, Elementary School Counseling Demonstration Act of 1995), professional associations (e.g., ACA, ASCA, ACES), training accreditation (e.g., Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs), and professional certification (e.g., state certification, National Board of Certified Counselors) continue to influence the specialty area of school counseling and the professional school counselor (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

### **The Professional School Counselor**

Today's school counselor is the product of a "long, slow, tedious process" (Odell, 1973, p.151) in an emerging profession. The title, Professional School Counselor, designates an individual who is engaged in the practice of school counseling (ASCA, 1995). The 1995 ASCA resolution to establish and accept the preferred title specifies that a professional school counselor (a) organizes his/her work around the basic interventions of counseling, guidance, consultation, and coordination; (b) provides services to all school levels; and (c) possesses specialized training in school counseling at a minimum master's degree level, meets the state certification standards, and abides by the laws in the states where he/she is employed. The training and credentialing of school counselors are important features in the development of school counseling as a profession.

**Training of school counselors.** The advent of a professional guidance association (American Personnel and Guidance Association [APGA]) in 1952, the passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, and the

increased school enrollments (i.e., the baby boomers born after World War II) were all factors that contributed to the standardization of training programs for school counselors and to the increased number of school counselors in the 1960s (Baker, 1992). It was during this time that states began to adopt certification standards for school counselors, and collegiate training programs became more uniform.

In 1967, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) issued guidelines for the training of secondary school counselors and, in the following year, guidelines were adopted for elementary school counselors (Myrick, 1993). By 1979, standards for the training of counselors by universities and colleges were adopted by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). In 1981, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) established standards for counselor education programs "to ensure that students receive . . . the knowledge and skills necessary to have command of common components determined by the profession as essential for counselors" (CACREP, 1994, p. 45).

School counseling is one of the specialty program areas for which the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) makes accreditation decisions regarding training programs. Although there are numerous accrediting bodies that have standards for counselor education programs (e.g., CACREP, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], state departments of education), CACREP is the

most closely allied accrediting body with the profession of school counseling (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

The CACREP standards are rigorous regulating guidelines for the preparation of school counselors (Paisley & Borders, 1995). A minimum of two full academic years of approved graduate-level study with a minimum of 48-semester hour or 72-quarter hour credits covering eight common-core areas (i.e., human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships, group work, career and lifestyle development, appraisal, research and program evaluation, and professional orientation) and clinical instruction that includes supervised practica and internships is required of all students (CACREP, 1994). In addition, curricular experiences for school counseling programs include foundations of school counseling, contextual dimensions, knowledge and skills for the practice of school counseling (i.e., program development, implementation, and evaluation; counseling and guidance; consultation), and a 600 clock hour internship in a school setting (CACREP, 1994). Currently, the majority of school counseling training programs are not accredited by CACREP (Hollis & Wantz, 1993). However, most programs are regulated through their respective state departments of education or as a part of a unit evaluation conducted by NCATE (Paisley & Borders, 1995). These regulations may or may not meet the curricular requirements of CACREP.

A national survey that was conducted in the early 1980s revealed that, although nearly all of the programs sampled adhered to the ACES standards for

training in terms of curriculum, some areas in the core curriculum were weak (Ibrahim & Thompson, 1982). Further, a number of curricula improvements were sought including more courses in counseling skills, group work, and better supervisory skills (Ibrahim & Thompson, 1982).

The American Association of Counseling and Development (AACD [formerly APGA]) task force published a report (1987) that stated school counseling was a profession at risk. The report pointed out that standards varied widely across the 333 training programs in the United States, only 70 programs had been accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and standards for certifying counselors varied widely across the United States. Following those findings, an interdivisional task force of representatives from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and AACD began working on plans to improve school counseling by enhancing the preparation of school counselors through reviews of the CACREP standards along with reviews and revisions of the counselor education curricula related to school counseling (Baker, 1992).

**Credentialing of school counselors.** School counselors were the first credentialed counselors and were regulated by individual state departments of education (Clawson, 1993). The catalyst to establish school counselor certification was the implementation of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 whereby state departments of education needed to establish criteria that would qualify

schools to receive federal funds for school counselor services (Sweeney, 1995).

The first credentialed school counselors regulated by individual state departments of education were required to have teaching certificates in a cognitive subject area as well as an additional endorsement in school counseling (Clawson, 1993).

While teaching experience is preferred by some educators as a prerequisite to becoming a school counselor, there are alternative methods for orientation and induction into the profession (Sweeney, 1995). By the early 1970s, some states removed the teaching requirement, which marked the recognition that school counselors, like school nurses and school psychologists, need not also be credentialed as teachers (Clawson, 1993). However, many states continue to require teacher certification prior to being employed as a school counselor (Sweeney, 1995).

Each state has requirements for a specialty credential for school counselors although the requirements for certification vary greatly in the areas of teaching experience, coursework, and practica (Myrick, 1993; Paisley & Borders, 1995; Paisley & Hubbard, 1989). Some states require as few as 24 hours beyond a teaching certificate to become a school counselor; others require two years of teaching experience as well as a master's degree in school counseling; still other states do not require previous teaching experience but do require a master's degree with extensive field experiences in school counseling (Myrick, 1993).

The first national certificate for school counselors was established in 1992 (Paisley & Borders, 1995). The National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)

credential is the result of joint efforts between the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and the American Counseling Association (ACA, formerly AACD). Applicants to the NCSC credential are required to be currently certified as a National Certified Counselor (NCC), to have completed specialized graduate-level coursework, to have completed two years of full-time professional counseling experience in a school setting, and to submit both a self-assessment and professional assessments (NBCC, 1995). The national specialty certification for school counselors is a significant professional statement, namely as a certification based on uniform national standards which may lead to reciprocal agreements between state certification boards (Clawson, 1993).

However, in spite of the best efforts of professional associations, accrediting bodies, and training programs to define the profession of school counseling, studies cited in the literature do not always reflect what have been identified as the best school counseling practices. The role and functions of the school counselor have been examined, critiqued, debated, and reexamined since the beginning of school counseling (Partin, 1993; Podemski & Childers, 1987). "All of this discourse has yet to result in a clear consensus on the school counselor's role or function" (Partin, 1993, p. 274).

It can be said that school counseling has been reactive rather than proactive throughout most of the historical development of the profession. Over the years, the reactive nature of the profession has led to confusion and



controversy regarding the role and functions of the school counselor (Baker, 1992). Many school counselors have experienced occupational stress as a result of feeling overwhelmed and underprepared to meet the demands of the publics they serve (Kendrick, Chandler, & Hatcher, 1994).

### **School Counselor Role Confusion and Conflict Decisions**

Numerous studies and articles have examined the school counselor's role concentrating primarily on the perceptions of counselors, students, teachers, parents, and administrators (Carroll, 1993; Cole, 1991; Coy, 1991; Day & Sparacio, 1980; Ginter, Scalise, & Presse, 1990; Helms & Ibrahim, 1983, 1985; Hutchinson, Barrick, & Groves, 1986; Hutchinson & Bottorff, 1986; Ibrahim, Helms, & Thompson, 1983; Olson & Allen, 1993; Podemski & Childers, 1982, 1987; Shertzer & Stone, 1963; Stanciak, 1995; Stickel, 1992; Tennyson, Miller, Skovholt, & Williams, 1989; Valine, Higgins, & Hatcher, 1982; Welch & McCarroll, 1993; Wilgus & Shelly, 1988; Wrenn, 1957). Albeit an often examined topic, the studies related to the counselor's role only agree that there are a variety of perceptions held by counselors, students, teachers, parents, and administrators, and that there is little consensus on the counselor's role when comparing these perceptions. Despite numerous role statements by ASCA (1964, 1974, 1977, 1981, 1989, 1990) as well as published surveys and articles, controversy and confusion about the school counselor's role continues (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

### **Role and Function of School Counselors**

The role of the school counselor refers to the part that one plays in a given situation; function refers to the way in which one carries out one's part (Myrick, 1993). As a practitioner, the role and function of a school counselor is either implicitly or explicitly defined by a number of sources and is often dependent upon the expectations and circumstances within the school setting (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Brown & Brown, 1975; Mayer, Butterworth, Komoto, & Benoit, 1983; Myrick, 1993; Paisley & Borders, 1995). Over forty years of research has failed to conclusively identify consensus on the role and function of school counselors.

As early as the 1950s, studies were conducted on the role and function of school counselors (Hitchcock, 1953; Hoffman, 1959; Tennyson, 1958; Tooker, 1957). The evidence from these early studies identified multiple and varied school counselor functions as well as differences between perceived and ideal functions (Carmical & Calvin, 1970). However, one unifying theme was that counselors perceived their ideal function as working primarily with students (Schmidt, 1962).

Results from surveys of school counselors during the 1960s indicated that they considered the school principal a primary role determinant (Herr & Cramer, 1965). A survey by Knowles and Shertzer (1965) found that school administrators favored a broad definition of the counselors' role emphasizing an authoritarian,

institution-centered counselor with an educational viewpoint stressing information-giving functions.

The first ASCA Policy Statement (1964) for school counselors was the product of five years of study and debate over counselor role and function (Carmical & Calvin, 1970). A number of surveys of various groups, such as students, parents, administrators, and practicing counselors, reported in the literature how these groups viewed the role and function of school counselors (Helms & Ibrahim, 1983). In general, the early studies on school counselor function utilized the ASCA Policy Statement to determine desirable counselor functions (Helms & Ibrahim, 1983). Although the decade of the 1960s attempted to solidify a definition of role and function, studies, such as those completed by Ashcraft (1966) and Ketterman (1968), failed to produce conclusive or theoretical constructs of the counselor's role and function "that could be accepted as significant or operationally unified" (Carmical & Calvin, 1970, p. 281).

During the 1970s and continuing into the 1980s, an era of declining enrollments in the schools and national problems that included economic inflation and budgetary cutbacks, counselors were frequently called on to perform a wide variety of administrative and clerical tasks (Helms & Ibrahim, 1985). Studies confirmed that counselors were spending considerable proportions of their time doing clerical tasks in addition to counseling, consulting, and coordinating (Hopper & Schroder, 1974; Morgan & Trachtenbert, 1974). Alarming, Buckner (1975) reported that a substantial number of secondary school counselors did not

know the responsibilities of a counselor as defined by ASCA (1974). Wells and Ritter (1979) reported apathy among counselors as a result of feelings of helplessness caused by confusion regarding the specific role of the counselor and a lack of goal directedness caused by overwhelming demands being placed on school counselors.

A breakthrough in role and function research occurred with a study by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983). Their research results indicated agreement by administrators, parents, and the business community with the statements enunciated by ASCA (1974) on the role and function of school counselors. Hutchinson, Barrick, and Groves (1986) reported the results of a survey that compared actual and ideal counselor functions as perceived by secondary school counselors with findings that indicated general agreement with the ASCA (1974) guidelines.

For many years, the generic roles of a school counselor have been counseling, consulting, and coordinating (ASCA, 1964, 1974, 1977, 1981, 1989, 1990). The specific functions and interventions of the school counselor have varied greatly and have reflected the specialist's professional objectives (Myrick, 1993). What becomes evident is that school counselors need to be clear about their role as a reference point to help them understand the issues related to their job (Myrick, 1993). Over 30 years ago, Peters (1962) cautioned that if the roles are not defined, school counselors will be saddled with tasks and responsibilities

that not only take away from but actually interfere with primary school counseling concerns. This statement seems equally relevant today.

The literature cited has given a cursory look at the confusion and controversy over the role and functions of the school counselor. Although there have been recent hopeful signs of agreement with the ASCA guidelines for the role and function of school counselors, confusion still exists, and the confusion has led to conflicts. The literature supports the opinion that school principals are a primary role determinant for school counselors and, therefore, a possible source of conflict.

### **Sources of Conflict for School Counselors**

Sources of dissonance that may result in occupational stress for school counselors include job expectations and demands, conflict with administration and staff, dealing with crises, and demands from multiple publics (Amey, 1990; Kendrick, Chandler, & Hatcher, 1994; Moracco, Butcke, & McEwen, 1984; Sears & Navin, 1983). The literature indicates that many school counselors feel overwhelmed and unprepared to face the multiple demands which confront them in the school setting (Baker, 1992; Carroll, 1993; Matthes, 1992; Partin, 1993; Thompson, 1992; VanZandt & Perry, 1992). These demands place school counselors simultaneously in multiple roles, some of which are in conflict.

A review of studies completed by Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983) and Olson (1986) indicated that school counselors perceive that they cannot meet the demands of the publics they serve (Olson & Dilley, 1988). School counselors

find themselves needing to respond to the numerous roles strongly endorsed by various publics (e.g., parents, principals, teachers). Their perceived inability to meet these multiple and often conflicting demands results in stress (Olson & Dilley, 1988). Using a sample of 361 ASCA members, Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen (1984) documented that occupational stress seemed to be a multidimensional concept that includes lack of decision-making authority, financial stress, nonprofessional duties, job overload, and dissatisfying professional relationships with teachers and principals.

Occupational stress is a fact of life for school counselors and may be treated positively as an occupational challenge (Baker, 1992; Thompson, 1992). Selye (1966), a pioneer in stress research, drew a distinction between distress, a destructive form of stress, and eustress, a positive force that can be energizing and increase productivity and efficiency. Constructive developmental theory (Kegan, 1982) espouses that an individual's meaning-making framework contributes significantly to his or her adaptiveness when faced with career challenges. Complete resolution of conflict is not the goal, but rather an increasing comfort in living with tension that may signal developmental growth (Kegan, 1991; McAuliffe, 1993). Challenges to one's equilibrium may be opportunities to assess personal meaning-making stances (McAuliffe, 1993).

Swisher (1970) completed a study to examine the relationship between a school counselor's professional behavior and conflicts as reported by teachers, counselors, and administrators. Frequency of conflict was associated with being

more professional, as disputes and assertive action were considered in terms of their positive consequences for achieving professional objectives. Swisher also found that the most professional counselors tended to be more student-oriented, concurring with Lortie (1965) that counselors are acting as student advocates by assisting students in maneuvering through the institutional system.

Although counseling professionals have gradually developed an identity for school counselors through training programs and professional literature, the same message has not always reached the schools' decision-makers which include principals and administrative personnel (Baker, 1992). School administrators may not be aware of the training and professionalism of contemporary school counselors, resulting in the assignment of nonguidance and counseling activities (e.g., administrative and clerical tasks, disciplinary responsibilities) to the school counselor (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Borders & Drury, 1992; Ponzo, 1989). Principals are important counselor role determinants in the schools, as the roles assigned will reflect the principals' goals and administrative orientation (Salmon, 1985). It is important to note that many principals have never taken a counseling and development course and are unfamiliar with counseling and development services (Lampe, 1985; Myrick, 1993). Principals who make either implicit or explicit demands on school counselors influence the behaviors of school counselors (Baker, 1992). Over time, these demands become school counselor functions and generally relate to noncounseling duties such as scheduling,

discipline, secretarial and clerical tasks, and paraprofessional tasks (Baker, 1992; Murray, 1995).

A comparison of counseling and administrative roles with regards to each profession's different training and responsibilities seems to point to inevitable conflict (Cole, 1991; Kaplan, 1995). Moracco and Gray (1983) identified Counselor-Principal Professional Relationships as one of six factors on the Counselor Occupational Stress Inventory, acknowledging the potential for conflict in this relationship. Results from a study by Moracco, Butcke, and McEwen (1984) found that counselors perceive that administrators do not understand, appreciate, or empathize with counselors' efforts. Recently, Kaplan (1995) proposed that "the real potential for conflict between counselors and principals . . . is that counselors and principals use different paradigms" (p. 261). According to Kaplan (1995), the principals' model is responsibility-comprehensive, learning focused, group centered, and action-and-concrete-results oriented, whereas the counselors' model is more responsibility-limited, mental health focused, individual centered, and process oriented. Counselors can strengthen their role and effectiveness in schools by understanding the principals' model and using those insights to enhance their counseling effectiveness (Kaplan, 1995).

Based on the literature cited, the professional identity development of school counselors may be a process that can be understood in terms of significant professional interactions, namely interactions with principals. It may be possible



to examine the development of internal self-conceptualizations (i.e., "professional individuation") within a decision making model as the process a school counselor employs to deal with conflict decisions. The next section overviews decision making and a conflict decision model in an effort to provide a meaning-making framework for viewing the professional interactions of school counselors.

### **Conflict Decision Model for School Counselors**

Decision making is an important part of an individual's academic, social, and professional pursuits. A decision is not a single event but rather a reflection of the meeting of individual, developmental, and contextual factors that is part of a process (Herr & Cramer, 1987). Theories of decision making span a number of disciplines that include economics, education, statistics, psychology, and management.

Rational decision making has dominated research in many social sciences. The core concept of many rational decision making models is that individuals act consistently, choose the means most suitable to their goals, and act on behalf of their self-interests (Hogarth & Reder, 1986). The expected utility model of decision making has dominated psychological research. The core concept of the utility model is that individuals have a stable ranking of preferences, full information about alternatives, and behave independently in maximizing outcomes (Arkes & Hammond, 1986; Zey, 1992). However, there have been a number of criticisms of rational decision making models leading to modifications

such as "contextually rational," meaning that decisions can be defined as rational within the context of the individual and his or her situation (O'Reilly, 1983).

Many individuals use the term rational to define the outcome of the decision process rather than the process itself (Dawes, 1988). The reasoned decision making model has been regarded as an excellent normative, or prescriptive, model of the decision making process (Dawes, 1988). However, with seven or eight procedural steps, the criticisms of the model include the time, effort, and costs involved in such a process and whether striving for optimal solutions would be appropriate (Janis & Mann, 1977; Miller & Starr, 1967; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

The criticisms of rational and reasoned decision making models have given impetus to the development of other models of decision making. Many of these are constructed on a descriptive analysis of decision making processes and of people reflecting on their decisions. One of the more influential models is Simon's (1976) concept of "satisficing" in which the individual looks for a decision that meets a minimal set of requirements. Tversky (1972) suggested an "elimination by aspect" model that consists of a set of decision rules to enable the decision-maker to rapidly select from a number of alternatives. Gottfredson's (1981) model of vocational development also implies a procedure of alternatives "circumscribed and compromised" by gender, abilities, and interests.

Other models consider the importance of the decision and the psychological stresses faced by the decision maker. A vocational model of

decision making was suggested by Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma (1951). This model suggested that incremental steps may determine many of the vocational decisions made by individuals. Etzioni (1967) proposed a mixed scanning model based on decision-makers using different strategies for fundamental than for minor decisions. Janis and Mann (1977) proposed four decision styles that are manifested to varying degrees under different conditions. Their model recognizes the personal anxiety individuals face when they must make highly consequential decisions. Heppner (1989) suggested that counseling, in particular, requires a broader view of human decision making that includes highly complex, intermittent, rational, irrational, logical, and intuitive decision processes. This suggestion is consistent with the Janis and Mann (1977) model.

Janis and Mann's (1977) Conflict Decision Model draws on theories of information processing and social psychology. The model acknowledges the diverse nature of human decision making and the impact of the situation on the process used to make a decision. The model includes four decision making styles that allow an individual to cope with stressful decisions. These styles are:

(a) **Vigilance:** A person is optimistic about finding a solution and believes there is sufficient time to make a decision. The individual searches carefully for a wide variety of alternatives and objectively weighs the costs and benefits before making the final decision.

(b) **Panic (hyper-vigilance):** A person is optimistic about finding a solution but believes there is insufficient time to make a decision. Panic and high

stress result in the individual settling for hastily contrived solutions that relieve the stress.

(c) Copout (defensive avoidance): A person is pessimistic about finding a solution and escapes by procrastinating (putting off a decision), shifting responsibility onto someone else (passing the buck), or rationalizing the least objectionable alternative.

(d) Complacency (unconflicted adherence or unconflicted change): A person dismisses a challenge or threat as posing no problem and continues unchanged, or reflexively adapts to whatever is offered.

The Conflict Decision Model (Janis & Mann, 1977) incorporates two important concepts. First, individuals are not consistent in the strategy they use when faced with a decision task. The strategies range from being a reasoned-active gatherer-of-information style to being a complacent-dependent decide-by-not-deciding style. Second, the gathering and appraisal of information is an important part of decision making.

The decision making process is an important part of an individual's professional pursuits. Janis and Mann's (1977) Conflict Decision Model proposes four frameworks from which significant decisions can be viewed. School counselors' interactions with principals can be situations involving conflict decisions, and reflection of the decision process from the context of this conflict decision model may illuminate the professional development (i.e., professional individuation) of the school counselor.

### **Summary**

Dramatic changes in both family composition and social themes in the past 20 years have placed demands on the schools to provide services to meet the mental, physical, and educational needs of the students. Fortunately there are a number of professionals within the school system who provide services for meeting the needs of the students. One of these service providers is the professional school counselor.

The history of the profession of school counseling has been predominantly reactive to local and societal needs. Over the years, the compounding of rather than the clarifying of counselor functions has contributed to confusion and controversy over the school counselor role. Principals are important role determinants in the school, and the counselors' assigned role will usually reflect the principals' goals and administrative orientation. Unfortunately, principals are not always informed of the school counselor identity that has developed through training programs and professional literature. A comparison of training and responsibilities for principals and counselors seems to point to inevitable conflict. Given that conflict is inevitable, the process of conflict decisions may illuminate not only the differences between counselors and principals but more importantly the development of an identity as school counselors manage inevitable professional conflicts. The professional identity of school counselors provides a frame of reference from which they make sense of their work. This professional

identity is the framework through which school counselors make choices and decisions that shape the delivery of professional services to students.

The Conflict Decision Model (Janis & Mann, 1977) proposes four decision making styles as a framework for understanding how individuals cope with stressful decisions. This model acknowledges the diverse nature of human decision making and incorporates two important concepts. First, individuals use different strategies when faced with a decision. Second, the gathering and appraisal of information is an important part of the decision making process both as a reflection of information processing and as an indication of the impact the situation has on the decision making process.

The school counseling literature is saturated with studies focusing on the role and function of school counselors. The time has come to accept the role confusion as one source of conflict for school counselors and begin to look at how school counselors deal with this conflict. The process by which school counselors manage conflict and, in particular, the inevitable conflict with principals, may be a defining experience in their professional development that illuminates their professional identity development.

### **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

As detailed in Chapter II, the literature about school counseling is largely descriptive of the historical context of the profession and empirically based on the role and functions of school counselors. Although the professional associations, accrediting bodies, and training programs have defined the profession of school counseling, the literature indicates that what counselors actually do in the schools does not always reflect what has been identified as the best practices in school counseling. It appears that the development of a professional identity contributes to defining who school counselors are which appears to be related to the services provided to students. In providing appropriate services, school counselors are involved in making decisions, and the interactions with principals seem to be particularly illuminating.

School counselors are credentialed professionals who organize their work schedules around the basic approaches of counseling, guidance, consultation, and coordination (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 1995). School counselors are professionals who implement counseling programs that provide services to the school community through a variety of interventions to promote personal growth (Coy, 1991; Myrick, 1993; O'Bryant, 1991; Wittmer, 1993). The role of the school counselor in a counseling program is to develop strategies to

help students cope with the challenges of a rapidly changing society which can have a critical effect on their academic performance (Coy, 1991).

The American School Counselor Association (1995) adopted the designation "Professional School Counselor" as the title for individuals engaged in the practice of school counseling. The title, professional school counselor, implies an identity with the profession. To understand the professional identity of school counselors, insights must be developed, processes need to be discovered, and theories proposed that address the development of a professional school counselor identity.

The purpose of this study was to examine the following questions, which were stated in Chapter I, related to the development of a professional school counselor identity from the perspective of school counselors' interactions with principals as defining experiences:

- (a) What factors determine the school counseling program?
- (b) Who is involved in determining the school counseling program?
- (c) How do school counselors make decisions about the school counseling program?
- (d) What issues of conflict with principals have been dealt with by school counselors?
- (e) What is the decision process used by school counselors when interacting with principals in professional conflict situations?
- (f) In what ways do conflict decisions reflect the role of school counselors?



The research task has contributed to the emerging theory of professional school counselor identity development by providing an understanding of the interactions with principals as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The research approach was a naturalistic inquiry through a series of interviews that addressed the question, "What is the conflict decision process utilized by school counselors when interacting with principals?" The culminating research dissertation is a carefully articulated document presenting a theory of interactions as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The theory is a synthesis of the research data complemented by participant statements presented as descriptions in both a holistic (e.g., school counseling) and a specific context (e.g., conflict decisions).

The research design was a qualitative study using a purposeful sampling of school counselors who were selected to provide the greatest potential for revealing discrete orientations. Data collection was through qualitative interviews using a structured open-ended approach incorporating an interview guide as well as observations in the schools. Periodic site visits, as needed, allowed for detailed knowledge of the schools and professional school counselors. Fixed timelines were established to adequately prepare and complete the research including a written dissertation by October of 1996. The logistics and practicalities of gaining entry and access to schools and to participants followed established university research policies. Ethical issues and matters of confidentiality were handled

through the use of informed consent and adherence to the policies for the protection of human subjects.

The qualitative methods permitted the researcher to study issues in depth and detail. The data collection was not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis; rather a wealth of detailed data about a select number of individuals was produced. The use of purposeful sampling generated information-rich cases to illuminate the study and elucidated variation as well as significant common patterns within that variation. A set of rigorous coding procedures guided the data analysis to further develop theoretically informed interpretations of the reality of school counselors. The theoretical formulations can be used to explain the reality of school counselor professional identity development and to provide an action framework for both counselor educators and school counselors which will ultimately provide services to better meet the needs of students.

### **Grounded Theory Approach to Qualitative Research**

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that uses "a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 24). The approach is used as a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), there is a reciprocal relationship among data collection, analysis, and theory so that "one does not begin with a theory, then prove it" (p. 23). Instead, the researcher begins with an area of study, and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge.

Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) who were interested in field research using a methodology whereby the concepts and relationships among them were generated and provisionally tested through the interplay of data collection and analysis. There are many valid reasons for doing qualitative research. The nature of the research problem or areas of study may naturally lend themselves more to qualitative types of research. "Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known....[or to] give the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 19).

As developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), grounded theory is a qualitative research approach utilizing systematic techniques and procedures of analysis enabling the researcher to develop a substantive theory that meets the criteria for doing "good" science: significance, theory-observation, compatibility, generalizability, reproducibility, precision, rigor, and verification. The techniques and procedures designed by these researchers give the analytic process precision and rigor, however, creativity is also an important element. Creativity enables the researcher to ask pertinent questions of the data and to make comparisons that elicit from the data new insights into phenomena and innovative theoretical formulations.

A well-constructed grounded theory will meet four criteria for judging the applicability of theory to a phenomenon. The theory should fit, be

understandable, have generality, and have control (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). According to the literature, the theory should fit the substantive area, provided the theory is faithful to the everyday reality of the substantive area and carefully induced from diverse data. Because the theory aims to represent that reality, it should be understandable and make sense both to the persons who were studied and to those practicing in that area. If the data upon which the theory is based are understandable and the interpretations conceptual and broad, then the theory should have generality. The theory should be abstract enough and include sufficient variation to make it applicable to a variety of contexts related to that phenomenon. Lastly, the theory should provide control with regard to action toward the phenomenon. The propositions proposing relationships among concepts are systematically derived from actual data related to only that phenomenon, and the conditions that apply specifically to a given situation should be clearly spelled out.

Qualitative methodology has been used by a number of scientific disciplines and philosophical orientations (e.g., anthropology, phenomenology, sociology). Counseling is one of the disciplines that has utilized a qualitative research approach to understand the meaning of relationships by constructing useful concepts of the underlying realities (Mathews & Paradise, 1988; Patton & Jackson, 1991; Strong, 1991). Chapter II reported on a five-year study conducted by Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992) that used a modified version of the constant comparative method of analysis to examine therapist-counselor development.

The analysis of individual interviews resulted in a stage model and process themes of therapist-counselor professional development. However, the literature review uncovered no published studies on school counselor professional development.

The purpose of the research study was to identify and understand the interactions that are conflict decisions for school counselors that illuminate an emerging theory for the professional identity development of school counselors. With little known about school counselors' professional identity and the development of their identity, a grounded theory approach was used to uncover and understand the phenomenon.

### **Pilot Study**

The pilot study completed between March of 1995 and January of 1996 involved two phases of interviews and the application of a qualitative approach to data collection, interpretation, and theory construction. The pilot study was used to demonstrate the methodology. The first phase was an initial interview that was transcribed, coded, and interpreted which generated an emerging theory. The second phase of the study consisted of interviews completed at the respective school sites of three practicing school counselors. The interviews and observations obtained from phase two provided further evidence, more variation, and greater density (i.e., depth of understanding) related to the theory.

### **Phase One**

The initial interview (i.e., phase one) was completed on March 22, 1995, and involved the researcher and a counselor educator who received her Ph.D. in May of 1995. The interview, which lasted approximately sixty minutes, was tape recorded and later transcribed. The counselor received her masters degree in counseling in 1978, and since that time, had been employed eleven and one half years as a professional school counselor at the elementary and middle school levels. Her experience was with rural public schools in North Carolina primarily in the western part of the state. She had worked full-time and part-time with individual schools as well as an itinerant school counselor for three schools.

The data collection during phase one addressed the following three questions: (a) What factors determine your school counseling program? (b) What is it about you that is a contributing factor to your school counseling program? (c) How was your program perceived by others? Prior to the end of the interview, the interviewee was asked to provide a metaphor of her school counseling program.

The initial interview was transcribed and the data interpreted using qualitative coding procedures (i.e., open, axial, and selective). The concepts from phase one included being a student advocate, intertwining of the school counseling program and the school counselor, and managing conflicts with various publics. As the interviewee described her metaphor, it evolved from "a fishing line that you can hold on to, but, if you don't want to [hold on to it], you don't

have to" into a metaphor which represented support and freedom "like a life preserver in terms of support rather than to save. . .help [students] in a way, but [students] have to put forth a lot of effort, too, [because] the preserver is not going to do it all by itself."

The interviewee spoke of her experience as a novice school counselor who "tended to use more of what I thought should be in the program to determine the program." Her view was that school counselors initially follow the comprehensive school guidance model (i.e., counseling, coordinating, and consulting) to determine the program. Novice counselors may focus on their particular skills and focus on that area more than the others which may impact the balance of services being provided. With experience, an awareness of other ways to determine the needs of the school community and to develop a program to address those needs evolves. "I began seeking more information from students, principals, teachers, and other counselors. . .within the guidelines of counseling, coordinating, and consulting." What evolved were counseling program goals to meet the needs of the students and to collaborate with other individuals to meet those needs.

There are lots of great things school counselors can do, but, if it's not what's needed by the student, then it's not going to be very effective. The school counselor's role is to provide opportunities for students to enhance their self-esteem and to develop the skills for making decisions, and then it's up to them.

The interviewee saw the school counselor and the school counseling program as intertwined. For this school counselor, the program and counselor existed as a "student advocate."

When I was on a committee. . . I was going to be coming from the perspective of the students. That's how the program was viewed, too, that counseling was to advocate for students.

However, this interrelationship can cause difficulties. When appraisals and evaluations by building administrators were completed, the counselor needed to be separated from the program. The interviewee cited the principal as the individual who has a hard time separating the counselor from the program.

The conflicts that were cited in the interview included those with parents, teachers, and principals. The counselor's decisions are not always clear-cut and intervention choices can be difficult.

It was really a struggle to keep your perspective on what was reasonable to be accomplished and all the barriers that you really had to get through to feel like you were doing something for the kid. There were days that it was not real easy being a school counselor, but there were lots of times that it was just wonderful, really wonderful.

A parallel to the metaphor of the life preserver that was given by the counselor can be suggested for the school counseling program.

The graduate training a school counselor has received is like a life preserver, however, school counselors "have to put forth a lot of effort because the preserver is not going to do it all by itself."



Three concepts were generated from phase one of the pilot study. One of the concepts was conflict. When the experienced counselor collaborated with other individuals to meet the needs of the students, there existed a potential for conflict. The second concept was the intertwining of the counselor and the program so that the delivery of services was intertwined with the professional decisions made by the counselor. A third concept was of the school counselor as a student advocate when meeting the needs of students. Therefore, the relationship among the concepts generated in phase one of the pilot study resulted in the following:

The school counselor, as a student advocate, was taking responsibility for making professional decisions regarding the school counseling program in conflict situations with other school personnel.

So, the broad initial question (i.e., what factors determine the school counseling program?) became narrowed and more focused during phase one of the research process as concepts and their relationships were discovered to be relevant or irrelevant. The concepts from phase one were tested using extensive coding procedures, and the following proposition to suggest how concepts might possibly be related to one another as an emerging theory:

#### **CONCEPTS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

A transformation (category) occurs (condition) when a novice (concept) service provider (concept) reflects (condition) on the franchise (concept) based on structural guidelines (concept) to deliver (concept) the 4-Cs (concept) and identifies (condition) incongruency (concept), therefore, develops (condition) from a personal perspective (concept) constructive

services (concept) that are a blending of influences (concept) to satisfy consumers (concept) and consciously (concept) delivers (concept) insightful empathy (concept).

The transformation (category) is identified as becoming (condition) a responsible student advocate (phenomenon). The challenges (category) as a responsible student advocate (phenomenon) in a regulated homebase (category) are to manage (condition) disapproval (category) and recognize (condition) when you are inculpable (category) and when you are accountable (category). The challenges (category) will be with knowledge brokers (concept), building managers (concept), stewards (concept), and other various publics (concept).

### PROPOSITION AS AN EMERGING THEORY

The story seems to be about the transformation of a school counselor. A beginning school counselor provides a counseling program based on how he/she has been trained in a graduate program. Through a process of transformation, the school counselor recognizes the needs of students and becomes a responsible student advocate. But the transformation also elicits challenges from teachers, the principal, and other school personnel which can become conflicts that the school counselor must manage. The transformation may be an indicator of professional identity development.

During phase two of the pilot study, data were generated by specifically asking practicing school counselors to identify and describe the process of managing professional conflicts. As noted by Strauss and Corbin (1990), grounded theory questions tend to be oriented toward action and process, therefore, the research questions in phase two of the study were narrowed to ask the following: What are the issues of conflict for school counselors? How do you, as a school counselor, deal with these conflicts?

### Phase Two

Phase two of the pilot study consisted of three interviews that were completed at each school counselor's site during a one week period in January

of 1996. Each interview lasted approximately ninety minutes and was recorded as fieldnotes by the researcher. Two of the interviewees were trained as school counselors, and the other interviewee was trained as a school social worker. The range of experience was ten, eight, and six years as a school counselor, respectively. One counselor had worked in two different school settings, and the other two counselors have remained in the school setting where each was originally hired. All three interviewees for phase two were female, practicing school counselors.

The emerging category, managing conflicts, from phase one of the pilot study was further tested by asking school counselors to identify their professional conflicts and to describe how they dealt with these professional conflicts. Questions for data collection during phase two included the following: (a) What factors determine your school counseling program? (b) What are the issues of conflict you deal with as a school counselor? (c) What is the process you use in making decisions regarding those conflicts?

The interview data generated fieldnotes and memos which were interpreted using qualitative coding procedures (i.e., open, axial, and selective). The coding procedures during phase two of the pilot study were used to ask the questions, "What seems to be going on here? What makes this data the same or different from previous data that I coded?" By returning to the data and specifically analyzing those similarities and differences, the concepts were classified into a category called professional conflict decisions. The concepts of

professional conflict decisions from phase two of the pilot study included administrative duties (e.g., discipline referrals), professional issues (e.g., respecting confidentiality), and professional judgment (e.g., following school procedures).

According to the interviewees, the school counseling program was determined by the counselor in consultation with other school staff (e.g., teachers, principal) based on the identified needs for each school term (i.e., social and behavioral issues). Each counselor also mentioned a plan for the academic year because, according to one counselor, "you have to address the specifics as well as the big picture." Priority areas were determined by mutual agreement of the counselor and principal. Due to the sheer numbers in each school (e.g.,  $n=780$ ), there was a limited preventive approach to the school counseling program, and crisis counseling was mentioned by each counselor as a part of the program. Group counseling was used to work with social and behavioral issues and allowed the counselor to reach large numbers of students.

As each discussed her view of the school counseling program, it became clear that the counseling program and the counselor's role were linked. Where there was a discrepancy between the views of professional staff, in particular the principal, and the counselor, the potential for conflict existed. The conflict was seen as the difference in philosophical approaches between the principal and the counselor when working with students.

It's difficult to establish your role as a school counselor when the principal doesn't understand what you do. If the principal doesn't understand, there

are difficulties like additional school duties, and who the counselor reports to.

My principal's attitude toward counseling is that it's an extension of the administration.

The informal power structure of the school is very powerful. To meet the needs of the children, you may have to use the informal structure, but sometimes you just have to wait it out.

In juxtaposition to the role conflicts mentioned by two of the counselors, was the counselor whose deputy principal (i.e., the administrator to whom the counselor reports) was trained as a counselor. In this school, the counseling program services were collaborative among the school counselor, administrators, teachers, and support personnel (e.g., social workers, school nurse) and malleable to the changing needs of the school community.

Based on data analysis, three concepts were generated from phase two of the pilot study that pertain to the classification of a category called managing professional conflict. One concept of professional conflict for school counselors was administrative duties (e.g., discipline referrals). The counselors were similar in their approach to administrative duties by finding the "counseling" aspect to each request.

I separate counseling from discipline so that, if a teacher sends a student to me for discipline, I offer to counsel the student and explain that the senior tutor will deal with the discipline.

I am not the disciplinarian although I do take the opportunity to try and find out the cause or reason for the misbehavior.

Administrative duties seem to be used as "opportunities" for the counselors to do individual counseling rather than either succumbing to requests or contesting requests.

A second concept of professional conflict was professional issues (e.g., trust, confidentiality). Teachers and administrators "wanting to know what the student said" were mentioned by two of the counselors.

Our school does not adhere to confidentiality. . .the principal and teachers are always asking me what students have said.

Although the counselor did not disclose confidential information, her concern was that confidentiality was not honored between the teachers and the principal. The counselor who reports to a deputy principal with a counseling background did not have problems with teachers and administrators respecting counselor/student confidentiality. One counselor mentioned the need to work on trust with teachers, "it's hard to get some of the teachers to refer students who need assistance because the teachers take it personally as if to say they can't handle the students." The counselor saw this "conflict" as being accepted and acknowledged by the staff.

I have to be aware of what I can and can't do. It takes time to build rapport and relationships.

A third concept of professional conflict was interpreted as professional judgment (e.g., following school procedures). Agency collaborations were seen by

the counselors as necessary and yet the infrastructure of school policies and procedures can be a source of conflict. One counselor sees this conflict as professional judgment. The counselor does what is necessary when there is a need for immediate action. If a referral is necessary, the counselor will follow procedures and process through the principal.

All the documents and activities must be approved by the principal. In one situation that needed immediate attention, I called Social Services because the case had gone beyond the services of the school. The principal's response was 'why didn't you tell me?' I said I was sorry but there was a need for immediate action, and I did what was necessary.

Another counselor spoke about the procedures necessary for reporting child abuse.

We have all these procedures about reporting abuse, but, if in my judgment there's a concern, I will contact Social Services and I will deal with the principal if and when the time comes.

Phase two of the pilot study sought to test the category of school counselors managing professional conflicts, specifically by asking practicing school counselors to identify and describe the process of professional conflict decisions. The concepts dealing with managing professional conflicts were tested and generated sufficient data to further refine the concepts from phase one. The concepts from phase two included administrative duties, professional issues, and professional judgment. All three concepts involved incidents of conflict decisions when the school counselor was interacting with professional personnel.

Of particular note were the defining experiences of interactions with the school principal. The emerging theory following phase two of the pilot study was

#### **PROPOSITION AS AN EMERGING THEORY**

The story seems to be about school counselors who have been transformed from novice school counselors following a structural orientation into experienced school counselors who are motivated by a self-conceptualization of the profession, and who respond to challenges based on the self-conceptualization as a responsible student advocate. When faced with challenges, the transformed school counselor will (a) avoid the challenge, (b) restructure the challenge, or (c) face the challenge. These school counselors will do what they think should be done as guided by their self-conceptualization.

Based on the two phases of the pilot study, it appeared that professional interactions with principals were defining experiences for school counselors' professional identity development. A second study (i.e., phase three) was undertaken to further test and refine the emerging theory of professional school counselor identity development. The second study focused on the conflict decisions of school counselors when interacting with principals.

#### **Data Collection**

The research study involved a naturalistic inquiry of the school counselors' interactions with principals as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. An inductive method of inquiry began with an investigation of the conflicts school counselors deal with and the process of decision-making in dealing with those conflicts. What was relevant to conflict decisions was allowed to emerge. The literature was used to stimulate the



theoretical sensitivity of the researcher and to amplify the information derived from the research study. The rigor of the research process contributed to an emerging grounded theory of the development of a professional school counselor identity as illuminated through conflict decisions when interacting with other professionals.

The research design was a qualitative study of professional school counselors using a purposeful sampling of school counselors in Guilford County Schools (North Carolina). Individuals were selected that provided the potential for revealing discrete orientations. Data collection consisted of structured interviews using an open-ended approach with an interview guide as well as observations in the schools. The logistics and practicalities of gaining entry and access to schools and to school counselors followed established university research policies.

### **Professional School Counselors**

Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in-depth on relatively small samples that are selected purposefully (Patton, 1990). Selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth provides the logic and power of purposeful sampling. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990). Therefore, given that the purpose of the study was to investigate the process that school counselors utilize when dealing with conflicts, the researcher focused on understanding the conflicts, decisions, and the conflict decision process of a discrete number of

professional school counselors. The purposeful sample consisted of information-rich cases in a study that illuminated the questions of the research inquiry and contributed to an emerging theory of professional school counselor identity development.

A purposeful sample of school counselors was selected from the professional staff who were employed as full-time school counselors in Guilford County Schools (North Carolina). A total of six ( $n=6$ ) school counselors were selected as the purposeful sample. Data collection consisted of one interview on-site with each school counselor and related researcher observations.

### **Interviews**

An interview, a purposeful conversation, was used to gather data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher could develop insights on how subjects interpret one or more aspects of their world (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The initial phase of the interview was an opportunity to build a relationship between the researcher and the subject by getting to know each other and for the researcher to put the subject at ease (Whyte, 1984). The initial phase of the interview also provided an opportunity for the researcher to briefly inform the subject of the purpose of the interview and to make assurances that what was said in the interview would be treated confidentially (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

The purpose of interviewing was to access the perspective of the person being interviewed, in other words, to find out those things we cannot directly observe (Patton, 1990). Interviewing allowed the researcher to enter into the

other person's perspective. Qualitative interviewing was based on the assumption that the perspective of others was meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. Sometimes termed "open-ended" (Jahoda, Deutsch, & Cook, 1951), or "unstructured" (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954), or "nondirective" (Meltzer & Petras, 1970), or "flexibly structured" (Whyte, 1979), the researcher was intent on understanding in detail how people, such as school counselors, think and how they came to develop the perspectives they hold (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The open-ended approach incorporated an interview guide (see Appendix A) which allowed the subjects to answer from their own frame of reference rather than from one structured by a prearranged question format.

The interview guide was a list of questions or issues that were explored in the course of the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merton & Kendall, 1946; Patton, 1990; Staessens, 1993). It was a "guide" to make sure that comparable information was obtained from a number of people by covering the same domains (Patton, 1990; Staessens, 1993). The interview guide provided topic or subject areas (i.e., domains) within which the researcher explored, probed, and asked questions to elucidate and illuminate that particular subject (Patton, 1990). Therefore, the researcher remained free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style albeit with the focus on a particular subject that had been predetermined (Patton, 1990; Staessens, 1993).

Based on the questions included in the two phases of the pilot study, the following interview guide was developed for the second study:

What factors determine the school counseling program? Who is involved in determining the school counseling program? How do you make decisions about the school counseling program?

What issues of conflict with principals have you dealt with as a school counselor? What was the decision process you used when dealing with conflicts with principals?

In what ways do your conflict decisions reflect your role as a school counselor?

The researcher as an interviewer endeavored to place the participants at ease and to encourage each to talk freely about his or her perspectives. It was the individual stories that illuminated the theory. As pointed out by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), a good interviewer communicates personal interest and attention to the participant by being attentive and by using appropriate interpersonal communication skills. Further, the interviewer asked for clarifications and elaborations and probed the participants to be specific by asking for examples of points that were made.

The qualitative inquiry was naturalistic (i.e., the researcher frequented places where the events naturally occur) as the data was gathered from people engaging in natural behavior (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Guba, 1978; Wolf, 1979). Therefore, the interviews were conducted at each participant's school site. With

prior consent by the subjects, the interviews were tape-recorded to allow the researcher to focus on the data stimulated by questions pertaining to conflicts, decisions, and the conflict decision process that each interviewee has experienced. Based on the pilot study, it was projected that sixty to ninety minutes (60-90 minutes) would be scheduled for each interview. Interviews were scheduled during the month of May, 1996. Each school counselor who participated was also asked to complete a descriptive questionnaire.

### **Descriptive Questionnaire**

A descriptive questionnaire to collect participant descriptive data was completed by each participant (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was based on a review of the literature associated with professional behavior (e.g., Goode, 1960; McCully, 1962; Swisher, 1970). In a study to examine the relationship between a school counselor's professional behavior and the frequency, intensity, types, and reactions to conflicts as reported by teachers, counselors, and administrators, Swisher (1970) measured a counselor's professional behavior by the scores on a Professional Behavior Index (PBI). The PBI (Swisher, 1970) included twelve criteria relevant to the counselor's background (e.g., highest degree earned, college grade average, etc.) and to the counselor's professional activities (e.g., conferences attended).

The PBI (Swisher, 1970) was modified for the research study. Modifications included eliminating items requesting salary and undergraduate grade average as well as adding items requesting information about certification,

years of experience as a school counselor, and ethnic/cultural group. The descriptive questionnaire included twelve criteria relevant to the counselor's background (e.g., highest degree earned, certification/licensing, experience), professional activities (e.g., reading, conferences/workshops, journal subscriptions, publications, memberships), role (e.g., other professional responsibilities), and demographics (e.g., gender, age, ethnic/cultural group). The data compiled from the completed questionnaires was used to describe the participants in the research study.

In addition to the descriptive data, the participants were observed in the school setting by the researcher (i.e., naturalistic inquiry). Participant observations were recorded as fieldnotes. A narrative that was a composite of the descriptive questionnaires and participant observations provided a portrait of the school counselors that participated in the study.

### **Participant Observation**

The successful outcome of participant observation relies on detailed, accurate, and extensive fieldnotes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Lofland, 1971; Patton, 1990). Fieldnotes are a written description of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990). Fieldnotes provide the visualization of the sights, impressions, and extra remarks to more completely capture the meaning and context of each tape recorded interview. The fieldnotes consist of two types of material, namely descriptive and reflective.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), descriptive fieldnotes represent the researcher's best effort to objectively record a word-picture of the setting, people, actions, and conversations as observed. In other words, the details of what has occurred in the field "to capture the slice of life" (p. 119). The authors further recommend that, in striving for accuracy, the researcher's observations should be presented in detail rather than summarized or evaluated. A further point is made that the description should not use abstract words (e.g., nice person) but should use specific, detailed renderings of exactly what people are doing and saying, and what they look like.

The following excerpt is from a descriptive fieldnote written to record the details of the first interview in phase two of the pilot study:

Descriptive Fieldnote: 1/3/96

I arrived at George Hicks School at 1:20 p.m., ten minutes before my scheduled appointment. I was mindful of what I wore and selected a tailored dress with short sleeves, and the hemline of the dress fell just below my knees. The school counselor had selected the day and time for our appointment citing the convenience of after lunch but before her afternoon committee meeting at 3:00 p.m..

It was a warm sunny afternoon, and the directions that had been provided to me by the counselor were easy to follow giving me a sense of comfort when I arrived at the school. There was a guard at the school gate who greeted me with a smile and a warm, "good afternoon," and directed me to where I could park the car and the location of the administrative offices where I needed to report. There were ample parking spaces directly across from the office, and I even found one in the shade. As I approached the office, I took note that there were no students wandering about the grounds, in fact there was no one wandering about the grounds.

The descriptive aspects of the fieldnotes encompass the following areas:

(a) Portraits of the subjects that include their physical appearance, dress, mannerisms, and style of talking and acting by looking for particular aspects of people that might set them apart from others.

(b) Description of the physical setting that may consist of both pencil sketches and written descriptions of the space (e.g., furniture, floors, walls) as well as a sense of the building or location where the observation takes place.

(c) Depiction of activities that includes detailed descriptions of behavior.

(d) The observer's behavior will be included as a subject of scrutiny as well. The researcher is the instrument of data collection, therefore, it is important to be sensitive to the behavior and assumptions which may affect the data that are gathered and analyzed. A careful record of the researcher's behavior can assist in assessing the impact of the observer's influence (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Reflective fieldnotes represent the researcher's best effort to capture her frame of mind, ideas, and concerns (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Sentences and paragraphs that reflect a more personal account of the course of the inquiry is the more subjective side of the qualitative study. The emphasis, according to these authors, is on speculation, feelings, ideas, impressions, and prejudices. The purpose of reflection is to improve the researcher's notes which will improve the study. The researcher must be self-conscious about her relationship to the setting and about the evolution of the design and analysis, hence the use of self-



reflection to keep an accurate record of methods, procedures, and evolving analysis.

The following excerpt is from a reflective fieldnote that was written as a subjective review of the first interview during phase two of the pilot study:

**Reflective Fieldnote: 1/3/96**

I must admit that I was feeling a bit nervous driving to the interview. It certainly helped my nerves to find the school easily and that the guard at the school gate gave me such an inviting smile. The school grounds appear neat and well cared for and there is sufficient parking for visitors. It does seem unusual that there are no students wandering about. I wonder if this is typical?

In summary, successful participant observation relies on detailed, accurate, and extensive fieldnotes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The fieldnotes consist of descriptive and reflective information. Descriptive fieldnotes are the researcher's best effort to objectively record a word-picture of the observation. Reflective fieldnotes are the researcher's personal account of the course of the inquiry and are the more subjective side of the qualitative study. Fieldnotes are used to record the observations that relate to the goal of data collection and are an important determinant of qualitative analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Lofland, 1971).

**Use of Literature**

Literature plays an important and varied role in a qualitative study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) point out that the researcher comes to the study with some background and knowledge in the technical literature. According to these

writers, it is important to recognize and use the researcher's background and knowledge of the literature. They further point out that one way of understanding the logic underlying the use of technical literature is to contrast its use in qualitative research to the use of literature in quantitative methods.

There are specific uses of literature by investigators using quantitative methods. As presented by Strauss and Corbin (1990), quantitative researchers are concerned, for the most part, with testing the relationships among variables or determining how variables cluster. Therefore, the researchers may use literature to identify previous research in an area, as well as to discover where there are gaps in understanding. Also, literature may be a source of theoretical and conceptual frameworks to guide quantitative research and to interpret findings.

In contrast, rather than testing the relationships among variables, Strauss and Corbin (1990) point out that grounded theory research is used to discover relevant categories and the relationships among the categories by putting them together in new rather than standard ways. In grounded theory studies, according to these writers, the phenomenon under study is explained in light of the theoretical framework that evolves during the research itself without being "constrained by having to adhere to a previously developed theory that may or may not apply to the area under investigation" (p. 49). Therefore, it is not necessary to review all of the literature beforehand because, if the researcher is effective in the analysis, new categories will emerge. These writers state that "we do not want to be so steeped in the literature as to be constrained and even

stifled in terms of creative efforts by our knowledge of it" (p. 50). The purpose of grounded theory is discovery, therefore, after a category has emerged as pertinent, the technical literature may be used to determine if the category is there, and if so, what other researchers have said about the category.

Technical literature has various uses in grounded theory research. Strauss and Corbin (1990) list the following five uses of literature:

(a) The literature may be used to stimulate theoretical sensitivity by providing concepts and relationships that may be compared to those that emerge from the actual data. The concepts and relationships that are repeated over and over again in the literature may appear to be significant and may be used in the field to look for evidence of whether or not they apply to the situation under study, and, if so, what form they take in the study. Descriptive material from the literature can also be used to enhance theoretical sensitivity as the writings often give accurate descriptions of reality with few interpretations. Knowledge of the descriptive material may be used to sensitize the researcher as to what to look for in the data and to generate questions that may be asked of the participants. However, it is important for the researcher to find evidence in the data and to delineate the evidence that appears in the study.

(b) Quoted materials from interviews and fieldnotes that are included in research publications can be used as secondary sources of data. Descriptive materials concerning events, actions, setting, and participant perspectives can be used as data and analyzed using qualitative methods.

(c) Literature may be used to stimulate questions to ask participants or to guide initial observations. Although questions may change after the first interviews or observations, the initial list of questions may be used to assist in the start of the research and to satisfy requests by human subject committees regarding the research intent.

(d) Literature may be used to direct theoretical sampling. The literature is a source of ideas about uncovering phenomena important to the development of the theory. Similar or different situations from those being studied may be reviewed which enable the researcher to add variation to the study.

(e) When reporting the findings of the study, literature may be used as supplementary validation of the accuracy of the findings or as a means to point out differences between published literature and the findings from the study. Published literature is not used to find validation for everything found in the research study as "this would hinder progress and stifle creativity" (p. 53).

The use of literature before a research study has begun will allow the researcher to be sensitive and knowledgeable about the study (Patton, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During the study itself, the literature can contribute to advancing the study as an interplay between reading literature and data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Although published materials were read during all phases of the research, the categories and relationships generated from the study were examined through rigorous data analysis.

Chapter II provided a review of the pertinent literature related to the proposed study. The literature allowed the researcher to become sensitive and knowledgeable about the study. In addition, the pilot study provided primary data for analysis. The two phases of the pilot study were utilized to propose and test the conceptualizations for a theory of school counselor identity development. The next phase of the qualitative study employed a naturalistic inquiry of the conflicts and the process of conflict decisions encountered by professional school counselors when interacting with other professionals in the school. A purposeful sample (n=6) of full-time school counselors in Guilford County Schools (North Carolina) were selected to provide the potential for revealing discrete orientations. Data collection consisted of participant interviews, questionnaires, and observations. Qualitative methods for data analysis consisted of rigorous coding procedures to refine the emerging theory of professional school counselor identity development.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis followed the procedures set out by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and progressed through the stages of open, axial, and selective coding. Open coding identified and developed concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions. Axial coding put the data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its sub-categories to develop several main categories. Finally, selective coding integrated the categories to form a grounded theory.

The qualitative methods permitted the researcher to study issues in depth and detail. Following procedures established by Strauss and Corbin (1990), the data collection was not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis, rather a wealth of detailed data about a cogent number of individuals and sets were produced. Further, the use of purposeful sampling was used to generate information rich cases that illustrated the question under study and elucidated variation as well as significant common patterns within that variation.

### **Open Coding**

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), open coding is that part of the data analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of the data. These writers stress that, as a first analytic step, open coding is critical to the completion of a qualitative study. Further, these writers state that during open coding "the data are broken into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena" (p. 62). These procedures give the concepts in grounded theory precision and specificity. Open coding procedures are used to reach the goals of conceptualizing and categorizing data.

Conceptualizing the data was the first step in the process that involved taking apart an observation, a sentence, or a paragraph and giving each discrete incident, idea, or event a name that represented a phenomenon. The conceptual labels, or code words, were grouped around a particular phenomenon in the data to reduce the number of units with which to work.

From phase one of the pilot study, the data from the interview were conceptualized and generated 143 code words which were recorded in a code word notebook. Each code word was cross-referenced with word/s from the interview and alphabetized for ease of review. The following is an example from the code word book:

**CODE WORD**

quandary  
query  
reflect  
regulated homebase  
relay/relaying information

**DATA**

what do you do? what then?  
ask, want to know  
how does that look? step back  
restrictions  
communication, communicate, say

The process of grouping concepts is called categorizing. The phenomenon represented by a category is given a conceptual name that is related logically to the data it represents and is a graphic referent. The purpose of the name is so "you can remember it, think about it, and most of all begin to develop it analytically" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 68).

**CATEGORY**

student advocate

regulated homebase

**CODE WORDS**

constructive services, consumer essentials, consumer requirements, ecologically, fulfilled request, insightful empathy, internalize, systems assessment

administrative task/s, building manager, distinguished, duration constricted, inculpable, initially, knowledge brokers, maneuver, merchandise, multiple publics, novice, opinions, order, packaging, perform, present, structural appraisal, structural guidelines

There are several ways of approaching the open coding process, Strauss and Corbin (1990) list three approaches. One approach is a line-by-line analysis that involves the close examination of each line, phrase, and word. This is the most detailed type of analysis but is also the most generative which is useful at the outset of a study to learn the coding procedure.

The initial open coding of the interview from phase one of the pilot study was a line-by-line analysis. The code words were written in the wide right-hand margin of the interview transcription. The code words were modified or deleted depending on subsequent reviews of the data. In the analysis of the interview from phase one of the pilot study, for example, the line-by-line open coding procedures resulted in the following:

somewhat. So, I always try to be real conscientious	45	personal responsibility, assaying, dutiful
about being sure there was a balance of services being	46	personal responsibility, congruency, delivering
provided, and that the services being provided met the	47	merchandise, satisfying consumers
needs of the students whatever those needs were.	48	consumer requirements

A second approach to open coding is to search for the major idea in each sentence or paragraph. This approach is useful when several categories have already been defined and the intent is to code around those categories. This approach was applied to the transcription from phase one as a subsequent review



of the data to modify or delete categories. The following is an example of a paragraph analysis:

**LINES 93-110**

...There are lots of great things that school counselors can do. But if it's not what's needed by the student than it's not going to be very effective. For examples, if you can do a great classroom guidance unit on decision making...but if you have students who parents do not allow them to make any decisions at all...who are very restrictive with their students particularly with adolescents...then that's not going to be a very effective program for them. What really might be needed by those students are ways to communicate with parents and ways to negotiate. You can't work under the assumption that every kid in your school is going to be at the same developmental level and be really effective. You have to be...with individuals you have to really know what's going on with them and tailor what you're doing to meet their individual needs...to be effective.

In this paragraph, the school counselor seems to be talking about developing insightful empathy (concept) and recognizing the essentials (concept) of multi-faceted growth (concept) to provide constructive services (concept) to primary consumers and to be aware of the opinions (concept) of restraining (concept) stewards (concept).

A third way of approaching open coding is to take an entire document, observation, or interview and ask: "What seems to be going on here? What makes this document the same or different from the previous one that I coded?" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 73). The researcher can then return to the data and specifically analyze those similarities or differences. The data collected from

each interview in phase two of the pilot study were analyzed as an entire interview. An example from phase two of coding an entire interview is

**WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS INTERVIEW? HOW IS THIS SIMILAR/DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS THAT HAVE BEEN CODED?**

identity depended on principals either as "civil servants" [STUDENT ADVOCATE] or as "under principal jurisdiction" [ADMINISTRATIVE TASK/S; STRUCTURAL]; sees political side of the school system; doesn't wait for permission, give apologies (if needed) later; if top (principal) doesn't understand role as school counselor there are difficulties such as additional duties, whom the counselor reports to; all documents and/or activities must be approved by the principal; counselor does what is necessary such as referrals, immediate action and used professional judgment; following procedures takes a long time and some instances can't wait; "I don't always have time for administration requests, my counseling takes priority;" keep a timetable to show how time is spent, keeps staff informed of services and activities; key to success is being assertive and adaptive, having a sense of what you are about, and knowing who you are in the inside

Finally, categories and concepts from the open coding process are written as code notes which are a type of memo (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Memos are written and coding paradigms are created to ask questions and make comparisons about the data. For example, the line-by-line open coding of the data from phase one was written as the following memo:

The school counselor, not someone else, in every case, not once in a while, assaying dutifully the responsibility in delivering the merchandise to consumers which they select from. The school counselor has the power or control over and feels responsible for a congruency in what is offered whether the consumers choose to use what is offered or not.

### **Theoretical Sensitivity**

To discover theory in data, theoretical sensitivity opens up the thinking about the phenomenon being studied. The use of questions (i.e., who? when? where? what? how? how much? why?) during open coding will move the analysis from the descriptive to the theoretical. Adhering to the procedures set by Strauss and Corbin (1990), further questioning will include temporal questions (i.e., frequency, duration, rate, timing), and spatial/technological questions (i.e., how much space? how much equipment? what skills or technology?). An example from the pilot study of theoretical sensitivity looking at the concept of "responsibility" would be

(1) Who is responsible? Is it always one school counselor or is someone else responsible? What about the students being responsible? The principal? Teachers? Anyone else?

(2) What is responsibility? What other ways describe responsibility? What other terms describe responsibility?

(3) How is being responsible experienced or handled? How does one know he/she is responsible? Do all school counselors handle responsibility in the same way? How do others become responsible? How is responsibility handled in other situations?

(4) When does responsibility occur? When do school counselors take responsibility? When is it appropriate to take responsibility? When is responsibility more important?

(5) Why is responsibility important? Why does responsibility take place? If the school counselor doesn't take the responsibility, what happens? How do others view the school counselor's responsibility?

### **Temporal Questions**

(6) How often should taking responsibility occur?

- (7) How long should the school counselor feel responsible?
- (8) How quickly or slowly does responsibility occur?
- (9) What is the time of responsibility?

#### Spatial/Technological Questions

- (10) How much space and/or equipment does responsibility take?
- (11) What skills or technology are required for being responsible?

#### Axial Coding

Strauss and Corbin (1990) continue with the qualitative coding procedures to a phase referred to as axial coding. Whereas open coding fractures the data, axial coding will put the data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its sub-categories to develop several main categories beyond properties and dimensions. The writers refer to a coding paradigm model that will link subcategories to a category in a set of relationships denoting causal conditions, phenomena, contexts, intervening conditions, action /interactional strategies, and consequences. This paradigmic model provides the analysis with density (i.e., depth of understanding) and precision. An example of axial coding from the pilot study that made connections between the category of "responsible student advocate" and its subcategories resulted in the following:

#### RESPONSIBLE STUDENT ADVOCATE: INTERVIEW LINES 93-110

Causal condition  
student needs

Phenomenon  
responsible student advocate

Properties of student needs

adolescents  
developmental level  
individual  
individual

Specific dimensions of responsible student advocate

<i>duration</i>	continuous	infrequent
<i>frequency</i>	often	never
<i>location</i>	school	open

Responsible student advocate context

Under conditions where student advocate is:  
continuous, often, and in the school, then

Intervening conditions

in the classroom  
parents  
outside school

Action/Interaction strategies for responsible student advocate

provide services  
talk with parents  
provide alternate services

Consequences for school counselors, for students, for parents

school counselor identifies with role of responsible student advocate  
school counselor does not identify with role of responsible student advocate

Axial coding puts the data back together again through a coding paradigm model. In this example of axial coding, the relationships to "responsible student advocate" become

The condition of student needs as adolescents, developmental level, and individual in a context that is continuous, often, and in the school with intervening conditions such as in the classroom, with parents, outside of school where the action and interaction strategies are to provide services, talk with parents, and/or provide alternate services will result in consequences for school counselors, for students, and for parents that the school counselor either does or does not identify with the role of "responsible student advocate."

### **Selective Coding**

At this point, the task is to integrate the categories and form a grounded theory. Strauss and Corbin (1990) call this step selective coding and see this as moving from the creation of the list of concepts to producing a theory. The process of selective coding involves the following steps: (a) explicating the story line, (b) relating subsidiary categories around the core category by means of the paradigm, (c) relating categories at the dimensional level, (d) validating those relationships against data, and (e) filling in categories that may need further refinement and/or development (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The pilot study, when submitted to selective coding, involved the following steps to arrive at the primary issue, namely transforming into a professional school counselor:

#### **INTEGRATION BEGINS WITH IDENTIFYING THE STORY**

The main story seems to be about how school counselors develop their identity with the profession. The individual in the role of school counselor will function according to a job description provided by the school or system. The establishment of the individual in the role as a novice school counselor follows a structural orientation that has been provided either by the graduate training experience or by demands from the school or by a combination of training and demands. This initial orientation to the profession will either be sustained or will be transformed as needs unique to the setting are identified. The self-conceptualization seems to be the primary force motivating the school counselor toward a professional identity. The school counselor will encounter numerous challenges to his/her self-conceptualization. Challenges may come from students, teachers, principals, or other publics. The school counselor is responsible for these challenges and will respond by (a) avoiding the challenge, (b) restructuring or partitioning the challenge, or (c) facing the challenge. The perception of the role by the school counselor is influenced by and will influence others in the interactions and the development of the

professional identity. The school counselor will do what she/he thinks should be done.

### EXPLICATING THE STORY LINE ANALYTICALLY AS THE CENTRAL PHENOMENON

Transforming into a Professional School Counselor

### DEVELOP THE CORE CATEGORY IN TERMS OF ITS PROPERTIES AND DIMENSIONAL RANGE

#### properties

self-conceptualization  
challenges  
perceptions  
responsible

#### dimensions

sustained	transformed
avoided	engaged
is influenced by	will influence others
is	is not

### ORDERING CATEGORIES SEQUENTIALLY IN AN ANALYTIC DIAGRAM

self-conceptualization + challenges + perceptions + responsible —>  
leads to the transformation into a professional school counselor

*how transformation is carried out:*

management of conflicts as challenges: administrative duties +  
professional issues + professional judgment —> leads to strategies for  
self-conceptualization—> which results in professional transformation

### VALIDATING THE RELATIONSHIPS BY WRITING A HYPOTHETICAL STATEMENT REGARDING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE CATEGORIES

Under conditions of self-conceptualization moderated by challenges, perceptions, and responsibility, school counselors undergo a transformation by means of conflicts as challenges which deal with administrative duties, professional issues, and professional judgment which leads to strategies for self-conceptualization resulting in a professional transformation termed "professional identity development."

The qualitative method of data analysis permitted the researcher to study issues in depth and detail. The analysis progressed through a series of rigorous coding procedures (i.e., open, axial, selective) to reveal concepts and categories.

The procedures guided the researcher in identifying, developing, and connecting the categories to form a credible grounded theory.

### **Credibility of Grounded Theory**

A qualitative study can be evaluated accurately only if the procedures are sufficiently explicit, and the research standards (i.e., scientific canons) are appropriate to the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Some qualitative researchers maintain that the standards or canons by which quantitative studies are judged are inappropriate to qualitative studies (Agar, 1986; Guba, 1981; Kirk & Miller, 1986). Grounded theorists share a conviction that the canons of "good science" should be retained, "but require redefinition in order to fit the realities of qualitative research, and the complexities of social phenomena that we seek to understand" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 250). The scientific canons include significance, theory-observation compatibility, generalizability, consistency, reproducibility, precision, and verification (Gortner & Schultz, 1988).

For example, the canon of reproducibility in quantitative studies means that any given study is capable of being replicated so that if the findings of the original study are reproduced in the succeeding studies then the findings are additionally credible (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). However, theory that deals with a social or psychological phenomenon is probably not reproducible because conditions cannot be exactly matched to the original study though many major conditions may be similar. Qualitative researchers see reproducibility in a different light. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), given the same



theoretical perspective of the original researcher and following the same general rules for data gathering and analysis in a similar set of conditions, another investigator should "reproduce" the same theoretical explanation about the given phenomenon. Should discrepancies arise, they are worked out through reexamination of the data and identification of the different conditions that may be operating in each case.

Another example of a canon redefined for qualitative research is generalizability. Grounded theory is generalizable to the specific actions and interactions that pertain to a phenomenon and the resulting consequences. The more systematic and widespread the theoretical sampling, the more conditions and variations that will be discovered and built into the theory, therefore, the greater the generalizability. Variations uncovered through additional research can be added as amendments to the original formulation.

There are three criteria for evaluating grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). First, judgments are made about the validity, reliability, and credibility of the data. Second, judgments are made about the adequacy of the research process through which the theory is generated, elaborated, or tested. Third, judgments are made about the empirical grounding of the research findings. It is the adequacy of the research process and the grounding of the research findings that were used to evaluate the grounded theory of this study.

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 253) cite seven criteria to judge the adequacy of the research process, namely

**Criterion 1: How was the original sample selected? What grounds?**

**Criterion 2: What major categories emerged?**

**Criterion 3: What were some of the events, incidents, and actions that pointed to some of these major categories?**

**Criterion 4: On the basis of what categories did theoretical sampling proceed? That is, how did theoretical formulations guide some of the data collection? After the theoretical sampling was done, how representative did these categories prove to be?**

**Criterion 5: What were some of the propositions pertaining to conceptual relations (that is, among categories), and on what grounds were they formulated and tested?**

**Criterion 6: Were there instances when propositions did not hold up against what was actually seen? How were these discrepancies accounted for? How did they affect the propositions?**

**Criterion 7: How and why was the core category selected? Was this collection sudden or gradual, difficult or easy? On what grounds were the final analytic decisions made?**

These criteria can be used to assess the adequacy of the researcher's complex coding procedure. The details reported in the findings should point to careful and thorough tracking of indicators as well as to conscientious and imaginative theoretical sampling.

In addition, seven criteria are cited to judge the adequacy of the empirical grounding of the research findings, namely

Criterion 1: Are concepts generated and what are the sources of the concepts? Concepts must be grounded in the data and not merely technical or common sense concepts.

Criterion 2: Are the concepts systematically related? The systematic conceptualization through conceptual linkages must be grounded in the data and should be woven throughout the text of the reported findings.

Criterion 3: Are there many conceptual linkages and are the categories well developed? Do they have conceptual density? The explanatory power of the theory is derived by the tight linkages in terms of features and density of the categories. A grounded theory should be tightly linked in terms of categories to their subcategories and between the several categories in the final integration.

Criterion 4: Is much variation built into the theory? A grounded theory should be judged in terms of the range of its variations and the specificity with which these are spelled out in relation to the source of the data.

Criterion 5: Are the broader conditions that affect the phenomenon under study built into the explanation? Macroscopic sources, such as economic conditions, social movements, trends, and cultural values, should

be directly linked to phenomenon through their effect on action/interaction and to consequences.

Criterion 6: Has process been taken into account? Identifying and specifying change or movement in the form of process is an important part of a grounded theory. Change is described as stages or phases and also as fluidity or movement of action/interaction over the passage of time in response to prevailing conditions. Any change must be linked to the conditions that give rise to the change.

Criterion 7: Do the theoretical findings seem significant and to what extent? The findings can be judged by the imagination or insight into what the data are reflecting. The creative interplay between the researcher and the data depends on four characteristics of the researcher: analytic ability, theoretical sensitivity, sensitivity to the subtleties of the action/interaction, and writing ability to convey the findings. Certainly the creative interplay also depends on the quality of data collected or utilized (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The double set of criteria (i.e., research process and empirical grounding) have a bearing on the issues of verifying the grounded theory study and of how the verification is to be ascertained. Components of the research process should be clearly laid out so that the presented theory or theoretical formulations can be assessed in terms of degrees of plausibility. A judgment can then be made under what conditions the theory might fit with reality, give understanding, and be

useful both practically and theoretically (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Under these guidelines, the adequacy of the research and the credibility of the theory can be judged.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The credibility of the theory must also be reviewed with respect to the ethical considerations of the research study. Ethics in research are the principles of right and wrong that a particular group accepts (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Most academic specialties and professional associations (e.g., ACA, ASCA) have codes of ethics that set forth these rules to help sensitize members to dilemmas and moral issues of their specialty or association. Some codes of ethics are narrowly conceived to protect the professional group from attack rather than to set forth a moral position (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Recent guidelines of ethics in research with human subjects are dominated by two issues, namely informed consent and the protection of subjects from harm. These guidelines attempt to insure that:

1. Subjects enter research projects voluntarily, understanding the nature of the study and the dangers and obligations that are involved.
2. Subjects are not exposed to risks that are greater than the gains they might derive (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

These guidelines are usually implemented through the use of forms that contain a description of the study, what will be done with the findings, and other pertinent information. The subject's signature on the Consent to Act as a Human

Subject form (see Appendix C) is evidence of informed consent. Most institutions have committees that review research proposals to insure proper informed consent and safety for the participants. At The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the Application for the Use of Human Subjects in Research was filed with the Institutional Review Board.

Although qualitative researchers have not developed a specific written code of ethics, ethical issues are of concern and protocols have been established regarding ethics in fieldwork (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Burgess, 1984; Punch, 1986).

The general principles by which the majority of qualitative fieldworkers abide in their research include the following as listed by Bogdan and Biklen (1992):

1. The participants' identities should be protected so that the information collected does not embarrass or in other ways harm them. Anonymity should extend to the written reporting and to the verbal reporting of information that has been collected through observation. The researcher should not relate specific information about individuals to others.
2. Participants will be treated with respect and their cooperation will be sought in the research. Participants will be informed of the researcher's interests and should give permission to proceed. The

researcher will neither lie to the participants nor record conversations on hidden mechanical devices.

3. The researcher will make clear to those with whom permission is being negotiated to participate in the study what the terms of the agreement are, and the researcher will abide by this contract. The researcher will be realistic in negotiating with potential participants by carrying out what has been agreed upon.

4. The findings will be reported truthfully based on what the data reveal. Fabricating data or distorting data "is the ultimate sin of a scientist" (p. 54).

Therefore, the research study was guided by ethical considerations. The issues of informed consent and the protection of subjects from harm was addressed through (a) participants voluntarily entering the research study with an understanding of the nature of the study and the dangers and obligations that were involved, and (b) participants were not exposed to risks that were greater than the gains they might derive from participating in the study. The consent form (see Appendix C) that was signed by each participant contained a description of the study, what will be done with the findings, and other pertinent information. The ethical principles that were followed in the research study fieldwork included (a) protecting participants' identities, (b) treating participants with respect, (c) negotiating permission with the participants and abiding by the contract, and (d) reporting truthfully what the data revealed.

### **Summary**

The methodology of the research study was a qualitative design. The approach was concerned with building theory through the interpretation of data using rigorous coding procedures. The purpose of the study was to collect and analyze data related to the school counselors' interactions with principals as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The emerging grounded theory has contributed to the understanding of professional school counselor identity development.

Grounded theory is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents as it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis pertaining to the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A well constructed grounded theory will meet four criteria for judging the applicability of theory to a phenomenon: fit, understanding, generality, and control (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The grounded theory approach requires the researcher to use systematic techniques and procedures of analysis designed to give the process precision and rigor. Creativity is an essential element to theoretical formulations from the data as the researcher asks pertinent questions and makes comparisons that elicit new insights into the phenomenon.

A pilot study was completed in two phases to explore the phenomenon and apply the procedures of a grounded theory approach. Phase one consisted of a single interview that was transcribed and analyzed using grounded theory coding

---



procedures. The analysis brought to light the conceptualizations of being a student advocate, intertwining of the school counseling program and the school counselor, and managing conflicts with various publics. The emerging conceptualizations were tested in phase two of the pilot study which consisted of three interviews using a naturalistic approach and an interview guide. The data analysis refined the concept of managing conflict and decision-making as administrative duties, professional issues, and professional judgment. The data analysis from the pilot study generated sufficient information to propose a second qualitative research study to test the conceptualization that conflict decisions, specifically interactions with principals, may be a defining experience in the development of a professional school counselor identity.

Data collection for the second study was a naturalistic inquiry consisting of a purposeful sample ( $n=6$ ) of full-time professional school counselors selected from the professional staff of Guilford County Schools (North Carolina). Data were generated from interviews, questionnaires, and observations. The data analysis consisted of rigorous coding procedures that fractured the data (i.e., open coding), connected categories (i.e., axial coding), and integrated categories (i.e., selective coding) to form a grounded theory based on the school counselors' professional interactions that included principals as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The resulting substantive theory was evaluated on the adequacy of the research process and the empirical grounding of the research findings. Throughout the study, ethical

considerations regarding participants and data guided the researcher in both conducting the research and reporting the findings.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

The purpose of this study was to propose a grounded theory that would contribute to an understanding of the development of a school counselors' professional identity. The review of the literature presented in Chapter II explicated that people entering a profession experience change externally according to the requirements of the professional role and internally according to a subjective self-conceptualization associated with that role. The basis for the development of a professional identity is the internal or self-conceptualization of the role. It is the professional identity that serves as a frame of reference from which professionals carry out their professional role, make significant professional decisions, and develop as a professional.

The study explored and conceptualized school counselors' professional interactions from a framework of conflict decisions as defining experiences. The proposed grounded theory has evolved from a naturalistic inquiry consisting of three phases of interviews. The first study, which included phases one and two, was completed between March of 1995 and January of 1996. The second study was a series of interviews with six practicing school counselors in the Guilford County Schools ranging in experience from one year to 29 years. The data were analyzed through a sequence of rigorous qualitative coding procedures as

presented in Chapter III to develop insights, discover processes, and propose a theory.

This chapter reports the findings from the second study and is divided into four sections. The first section is a description of the participants. The second section describes the findings of the evolving personal perspective from each interview. The third section describes the major theoretical categories and the core category (i.e., blending of influences) that were generated from the data. The final section presents the substantive theory as a process for the blending of influences.

### **Participants**

The second study consisted of interviews with six practicing school counselors. The six participants included five females and one male who identified their ethnic/cultural group as Caucasian/white ( $n=4$ ) or African-American/black ( $n=2$ ). All six counselors have a masters' degree in counseling and are certified by the state as school counselors. In addition to the state certification, three of the counselors are National Certified Counselors (i.e., NCC) and one is a Licensed Professional Counselor (i.e., LPC). The years of experience as a school counselor were one, two, four, nine, twenty-two, and twenty-nine years. The counselor with 29 years of school counseling experience has completed the coursework for her doctorate. Two of the participants have worked with only one principal while four of the participants have worked with two or more principals during their tenure as a school counselor.

Professional activities of the participants were varied. Five of the counselors indicated they devoted one to three hours per week for professional reading. The other counselor indicated more than three hours per week devoted to professional reading. With regards to conferences and/or workshops attended in the previous twelve months, 50% (n=3) indicated 6-10, 33% (n=2) indicated 1-5, and 17% (n=1) indicated more than 10. Every participant had at least one professional journal subscription and two counselors had 3-4 subscriptions. Only one counselor indicated that she had one published article. Demographic characteristics of the six participants are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

**Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Study Two**

Category	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	5	83 %
Male	1	17 %
<b>Ethnic/cultural group</b>		
Caucasian/white	4	67 %
African-American/black	2	33 %
<b>Certification</b>		
School Counselor (certified by the state)	6	100 %
National Certified Counselor (NCC)	3	50 %
Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)	1	17 %
<b>Experience as a school counselor</b>		
1-2 years	2	33 %
3-5 years	1	17 %
6-10 years	1	17 %
more than 10 years	2	33 %
<b>Number of principals counselor has worked with</b>		
1 principal	2	33 %
2 or more principals	4	67 %
<b>Approximate hours devoted to professional reading per week</b>		
1-3 hours	5	83 %
more than 3 hours	1	17 %
<b>Number of conferences/workshops attended in previous 12 months</b>		
1-5	2	33 %
6-10	3	50 %
more than 10	1	17 %
<b>Number of professional journal subscriptions</b>		
1-2	4	67 %
3-4	2	33 %
<b>Number of published books or articles</b>		
0	5	83 %
1	1	17 %

### **Summary of the Interview Analyses**

The research completed in the second study consisted of six interviews with practicing school counselors. The findings are reported in the same order in which the interviews were completed. Within each interview analysis, underlining is used to highlight the first usage of code words and phrases. A code number has been assigned to each interview to maintain anonymity of the participants.

#### **Phase 3. Interview 1 (P301)**

The participant was a white female with four years of school counseling experience at the same school. She was the only school counselor for an elementary arts magnet program, and she has worked with two principals during her tenure. A fieldnote captured the school atmosphere as "children laughing, music playing, artwork displayed in the hallways, and a group of individuals working on sculptures in the courtyard."

The researcher was met in the school office by the school counselor. She immediately came forward to shake hands and offer a warm "good morning." She led the way to her office that was located in another part of the school among the classrooms. As we entered her office, the counselor paused to flip a placard that hangs on her door from the side stating "the counselor is in" to the side that states "please do not disturb." A fieldnote described the setting as follows:

The counselor's office reflects a children theme (e.g., material for curtains, colors) with many counseling resources (e.g., toys, games, books). A sense of order in the storage of the items was evident and the materials were readily accessible. The counselor's desk and two "guest" chairs were

arranged on an area rug. The room was lit by a table lamp and the indirect light emanating from the hallway through glass windows along the top of one wall. There was music from a radio station playing softly in the background which [the counselor] turned off before the interview began. She also checked to see that the answering machine was turned on indicating "that way we won't be disturbed."

There was a sense of order to the office area, and the room arrangement would serve a variety of purposes (e.g., groups, conferences, counseling). The lighting from a table lamp and natural light through the windows provided a softness to the room. The researcher continued in a fieldnote

I chose to sit in the nearest guest chair which I found to be very comfortable. [The counselor] immediately produced the two forms [i.e., consent, participant questionnaire] that she had completed. I have the feeling she is a very organized individual. She appeared excited to get started which was reflected in her statements, "I've really been looking forward to this. I've wondered what this will be like." The tape recorder was turned on, and the interview began.

The interview began with the question "what factors determine your school counseling program?" An analysis of the interview transcription produced a category identified as franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program) that consisted of the service provider (i.e., school counselor) involved in a blending of influences (i.e., judgments) through an evolving (i.e., changing) franchise structure.

Overall, I guess, I really do try to take a look at the population that I'm working with...the families, the teachers, and the administration all have different ideas about what my role is here. So, I try to find something that is common between all of those and tie it all together, and it's really a big



job a lot of the time, because they all have different needs, and they all see me as being able to fit into a lot of different roles.

But I think every year is a little different. I just keep learning more about different areas.

Further, the structural position of the service provider (i.e., role of the school counselor) includes a structural position explanation (i.e., job description) that was written by the system manager (i.e., central administration supervisor) to be used by the homebase (i.e., particular school) in the school system. The structural position explanation was personified by the school counselor through judgments (i.e., decisions) made regarding the structure of the school counseling program. This personification emerged during the two stages of the first study and was identified as the intertwining of the counselor and the program. From this interview, the category of franchise structuring has a property of an intertwining of the counselor and the multiple publics (i.e., principal, teachers, students) who are a part of the school.

Some days I feel like I spend so much time here and work with so many families...but sometimes it's hard to separate my life from their life...like this is my life, like my life is their life except for when I go home at night.

It's not just my job. I mean this is a big part of my life.

I don't feel that I work for Guilford County Schools at all. I feel like I work for this school, and, that if I were moved to another school, that I would be a different person...the school makes who you are in a way, and that you just kind of bond with that, with that building, and with that faculty, and that you become part of that [school].

During the discussion about the school counseling program, the school counselor's experience emerged as a dimension of franchise structuring (i.e., school counseling program decisions), and school counseling experience was associated with judgments made in relation to franchise structuring decisions. Judgments made during the participant's novice year (i.e., first year) were tempered by an expressed concern for employment peril (i.e., job security) with subsequent years focused on being responsible (i.e., accountable) and pliant (i.e., flexible) to the needs of multiple publics (i.e., students, teachers, principal).

I think before what kept me from doing it [structuring the program] was just being afraid that it wouldn't be accepted, and that maybe my job would just kind of fizzle out, or that they would find somebody else to do more of what the teachers thought. But I really do get the sense now, the longer I'm here, that's what the teachers want. At first I guess I was just more trying to go along with what I was told counselors do and seeing what other counselors in the county were doing.

I'm trying to be as flexible as I can be and still have some kind of schedule.

Throughout the interview, the participant described numerous instances of dealing with others that were categorized as managing interactions. Many of the interactions resulted in a hindrance (i.e., frustration) or an inflamed (i.e., "burned me up") reaction from the counselor. For instance, time restrictions, multiple masters, and limited finances are hindrances as expressed in the following:

A lot of [what I can do] has to do with how much time I have. There are so many things that I would really want to do, but it's hard not having an

assistant, and it's hard not having a secretary that I can use because there is so much paperwork involved. And all that is on my shoulders.

I just have to drop whatever I'm doing and come back to it later on. So, a lot of times I'm pulled, and I don't even know that I'm going to be pulled away from [my counseling]. That's just part of the job that's not going to get any better.

A budget...it's really hard. It's how much can I put into [the counseling program] on my own financially...I have spent about as much as I could spend of my own trying to get special things going.

Another significant hindrance for the school counselor was categorized as rejoinder (i.e., feedback, response) or the lack of feedback. In particular, the counselor expressed her perception that there was a lack of appreciation for the services she has provided to the school.

It would be nice if [the director of school counseling] would even acknowledge what I'm doing...it's just like there's no acknowledgment. It's just difficult.

So, it's not like I'm doing it for recognition, it's nice, but I wish that somebody would recognize that this is happening, not so much that I'm doing it but that it's happening, and there's good things going on and it's not [that] the counselors are just doing paperwork, or stuff like that.

And with my other principal there was [feedback], and he would add to it. That was the best thing about it. He would go, 'that's great, can we also do this, or next year could we add to this, or could I get involved with it?'

The counselor used comparisons between the two principals she has worked with during her tenure (i.e., length of service) at the same school when discussing her interactions with principals as defining experiences. Her

comparison of interactions with each of these principals illuminated the linking of hindrance to managing interactions.

[I've worked with] two principals and they're very different...they were just so different from each other. Their leadership styles were totally different, and that has been probably the most frustrating thing for me is to have to change from somebody that I felt was very interested and motivated and could motivate other people to somebody that needs to be motivated, and that's been the most difficult thing to get used to.

In a situation with her current principal, the counselor was inflamed by the principal's lack of understanding of her counseling qualification. This situation arose when the counselor had recommended referring a student to a mental health agency for counseling because of the student's need for intense therapy. In a conference with the student's father, the principal said, "we're not qualified to do what this child needs." The counselor responded with

We are qualified. I just can't do therapy [on a long term basis with severe cases] at school. I don't have the time to do everything. I'm more than qualified and that just burned me up.

A significant hindrance for the school counselor was a category named professional differential. This category was the perception of the principal that there was a difference among counselors (e.g., mental health, private practice) and that school counselors are not held in the same professional esteem.

I think he really does believe that I'm competent and that I know what I'm doing, but he doesn't place the same value on the counselor at the school as the counselor at mental health or the counselor in private practice.

As managing interactions was linked to professional differential, professional differential was linked to being professionally abused. This link was created by the counselor's experience with irate parents. In particular, a situation when "this parent just cussed us out, screamed at us, hung up on us, went and filed complaints against us, came to school, and really was just so nasty." The counselor, however, was adamant in being professional and indicated to her principal

I will tell you now that I will go in, and I will be professional, but if she starts acting like she did, I'm going to get up and leave because there is a limit to what I can listen to and to what you can expect me to listen to.

Being professionally abused was linked to professional differential as parents "can demand that their needs be met immediately, and they can do that in any way that they want to" because "we're going to have to just sit there and take it." The counselor had discussed this particular situation with friends who are in other careers. Their reactions to the situation were "What? And you sat there, and you had to listen to that?"

These interactions may become either obstructions (i.e., barriers) or challenges to the school counselor. When the school counselor spoke of interactions as challenging (i.e., difficult choices), her responses to managing interactions indicated a judgment process (i.e., decision process). The judgment process was a combination of time constraints, program requirements, student

needs, and counselor energy. When making judgments about franchise structuring, the counselor sees it as

It's just a matter of how much time do I have left to plan this and to implement it and do everything...and that's on a daily basis, too.

I have not felt that [weekly classroom guidance is] an option for me at this school because I'm needed so much individually and so much one-on-one with students and with parents and then small groups that I feel like that's our school.

The judgment process was a recognition of the counselor's realm of services. The judgment process was tied to the relaying of information to various publics.

I've gotten a little bit more comfortable with saying this is within my realm, and this is not what I'm here for and there's somebody else.

It's really important to me what the teachers want from me, but it's even more important for me to be able to tell them what I can offer them... there is a limit to what I can do for them, but I can hook them up with somebody else.

I know my job is not as clear cut, but, to me, it ought to be mental health issues, and social issues, and family issues. English as a second language is not a counseling issue. I've tried to get as much of that across, and I've gotten better at doing that and not feeling bad.

I have gotten more to the point of doing what I think is the best, and not really worrying about what's going on with the county.

The concepts generated from this interview were grounded in a description of the interactions when making judgments (i.e., decisions) for franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program). The category of

professional conflict decisions that emerged from phases one and two of the first study was refined as the judgment process when dealing with challenging professional interactions. A variety of concepts were related to this category, namely intertwining, hindrances, obstructions, and relaying information. The concept of intertwining of the counselor and program from the first study evolved into the intertwining of the counselor and the school. The concept of hindrances was comprised of numerous sub-categories (i.e., rejoinder, professional differential, professionally abused) with hindrances linked to managing interactions that may become either challenges or obstructions. Challenging interactions were those identified by the counselor as situations where a judgment process was utilized. The common thread throughout the category was relaying information whether the judgment process was utilized or not.

The evolving personal perspective (i.e., self-conceptualization) that reflected the development of one's professional identity as a school counselor was seen as the relationship among concepts. Based on the rigorous coding procedures described in Chapter III, the researcher suggested the following proposition to show how the concepts were related:

The self-conceptualization as a service provider is an evolving personal perspective. At the onset of the structural position as a novice service provider, the individual lacks insight and is assaying to fulfill the structural position requirements. Through duration in the structural position, the service provider acquires experience that develops an insightful empathy and a personal perspective. The intertwining of the service provider with the homebase is related to the duration of service with characteristics of personal attachment, personal responsibility, and personal internalization.

The personal perspective of the service provider is used to design strategies and to manage interactions with multiple publics. In managing interactions, the service provider encounters hindrances which may result in a state of non-ease. Some interactions are identified by the service provider as challenges whereby a judgment process is utilized that may result in a plan of action to safeguard the personal perspective. Other interactions are identified as barriers that also may be reflected in the evolving personal perspective.

The judgment process to manage interactions is based on a personal perspective to relay information and maneuver challenges. The judgment process may be an indicator of an evolving self-conceptualization.

*So, the story from this first interview seems to be about an evolving professional perspective. The experiences of the service provider (i.e., school counselor) in managing interactions with various publics (i.e., principal, teacher, parents) utilized a judgment process (i.e., decisions) that falls along a continuum from being complacent to being vigilant. Intervening conditions for responding to multiple masters (i.e., student needs, service requests) included multiple demands, time constriction, accountability, finances, school policy, professional differential, and a need for feedback. The service provider may respond by becoming frustrated, inflamed, and/or challenged. From this counselor's story, the process reflected an evolving professional perspective.*

### **Phase 3. Interview 2 (P302)**

The participant was an African-American female with two years experience as a middle school counselor. During those two years she had worked with the same principal. Prior to becoming certified as a school counselor, she had spent twelve years in education and "worked with numerous principals." She



was one of two counselors providing services in a suburban middle school. The counselor's office was located on the second floor of the school and was literally over the principal's office. The "guidance" departmental offices consisted of a reception area and two counselor's offices. The reception area was crowded with furniture (i.e., large work table surrounded by five chairs, a sofa, and secretarial office furniture in the far corner) and was brightly lit with overhead fluorescent lighting. The researcher's reflective responses to the departmental office area were that "the reception area was crowded and confining" and "the counselor's office had lots of space and was very calm." In contrast to the reception area, the counselor's office had an open floor area and was softly lit by a table lamp. As recorded in a fieldnote

[The counselor's] office is softly lit with a table lamp (i.e., the overhead fluorescent light is not on). There is a dried flower wreath on the wall along with posters depicting adolescent concerns (e.g., AIDS, getting along with others). There is a large, over-stuffed pink chair in one corner of the office along with two other "school" chairs. One long, narrow window at the side of the office desk adds to the soft lighting, and there is a plant hanging from the ceiling that covers the upper third of the window. There is a sense of openness in the office as the floor space is uncluttered. The office desk is heaped with paperwork, and the phone sits on top of a stack of files. During the interview, the counselor positions herself with her back to the desk and facing the researcher.

A reflective fieldnote provided a subjective view of the imminent interview for the researcher. The fieldnote stated

I was immediately drawn to the plump pink chair that seemed to say, "sit on me." It was a very comfortable chair. [The counselor] was smiling and

saying, "I've been looking forward to this...should be interesting." I was also drawn to [the counselor] as she exudes warmth, care, and calm as an individual. I was put at ease and I, too, was "looking forward to this."

In responding to the initial question about franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program), the participant described what was coded as consumer maintenance (i.e., services provided to students). The structural guidelines (i.e., training) were cited first followed by a description of the counselor's personal perspective of those guidelines in her current setting.

When I got into school counseling, of course, the book knowledge says that your surroundings, the type of children, the staff that's there, the community and that kind of thing. And I found that to be very much the truth since I've been here. I've found that the programs that I would love to do or be a part of have given way to more things in the area of maintaining a kid...a lot more in the way of emotional help.

...a lot depends on the kinds of kids that you're serving. A lot depends on what your goals are, or what [you are] supposed to achieve according to stated standards, and your overall philosophy of counseling.

Within her comments describing franchise structuring, the influence of the building manager (i.e., principal) was highlighted. "And, of course, the principal sets the tone as to what he wants and those programs that you put forth." The concept of "sets the tone" was considered significant in this interview and was coded as timbre. The counselor viewed the timbre at her school as

We're held accountable for how kids achieve in school. Therefore, for us, it's real important that achievement be of the utmost [concern].

The homebase timbre (i.e., tone of the school) was set by the building manager and was a part of the regulated homebase (i.e., school structural guidelines) by which the staff, including the school counselors, were held accountable (i.e., responsible) for the services provided. The relationship of timbre to accountability was seen as the category termed homebase guidelines. "We're held accountable or being held more accountable for grades." This was seen as defining the role of the counselor from the administrator's perspective, however, the counselor provided further insight into her role from a personal perspective.

There's no way you can talk about [student] achievement without first talking about all that baggage that a kid has with him. It gets in the way of learning when you have a lot of problems already on your plate. It just gets in the way of learning, and what I feel like my role is as a counselor is to move things around on the plate so we can get some learning going on.

The intertwining of the personal and professional perspectives also was a part of the role of the school counselor. For this school counselor, the intertwining resulted in a perspective of being a responsible student advocate and was displayed as insightful advocate empathy (i.e., "what's best for the student").

I have patience. I see that's where my role is...I think that one of the greatest roles that I can do is to be an advocate and an active listener for [the students].

I'm speaking from the heart. I'm speaking from the knowledge I've gained. But the heart part supersedes...all of that...My decisions are based on what is best for that child in that particular situation along with the total school program.

It's the same thing with this office. I like soft lights, I like books, I like things on the wall. I want kids to come in here and feel at home...I think they don't get that individualized attention at home, or some adult is going to listen...And I want that kind of atmosphere. I want this office, even though my desk is messy, I want this office to be a reflection of who I am.

The intertwining of the counseling services with the school program was developed into a category termed tongue-and-groove that represented both fit and support between counseling services and student achievement. Franchise structuring was "generally for the benefit of optimizing the student achievement, of course, but also for the emotional help."

I believe that guidance supports what's happening in these classrooms ...Making sure that kids know themselves, and also are able to achieve.

The school counselor was involved in decisions related to franchise structuring. Decisions were coded as judgments, and, in the case of this counselor, judgments involved interactions with the building manager and the alternate service provider (i.e., the other school counselor).

Just sitting down with your partner, I think, and just saying "what do we need? or what are we going to do jointly?"...So, we do things that are separate...There are some things...we just basically do together.

Judgments involve confrontation (i.e., "we just battle it out"), arbitration (i.e., "talk about it and compromise"), and collaboration (i.e., "that's what we do together"). In discussing the essentials (i.e., needs) for the annual structured services (i.e., plan) for the counseling program, the counselors communicated

(i.e., talk about it) their respective personal perspectives that would take into consideration the guidelines from the system manager (i.e., central administration supervisor) as well as the homebase (i.e., particular school).

Well, the other counselor and I will sit down. Like last year, we did a yearly plan. This year we also did a yearly plan, and then we are asked to submit to our supervisor on a monthly basis things that we do. Also, we have our own ideas about what's needed.

I guess because I'm the newer one here, things that have worked for my partner have been tried and true...My philosophy, where I come from, may be different from hers, so it's good that we bounce off of each other...We end up saying, "Let's do it this way this time, and next time we'll do it this way."

Giving it a try and if that doesn't work, it doesn't work. We'll scrap it and we'll do something different next time and we'll just remember from time to time. But always, I think, in the back of our minds is "what's going to be best for the students?"

Although the counselor has fourteen years of experience with the schools, only the previous two years have been spent as a school counselor. Her responses about interactions with principals were mixed between general opinions about principals (i.e., "I've worked with several principals") as well as specific comments about her current principal.

Some principals want you to be able to make most decisions and move on. I'm very grateful that I have a principal that doesn't come in here and say, "Well, what you are going to do with this, that, and the other." He does expect you to have everything in your power covered and done before you bring it to him. And that's when he'll say, "O.K., you've done your part, then let me take it up to here."

Comments regarding the interactions with her current principal reflected a mutual respect for each other as professionals. "I think I relate well with him, and I respect his position." This respect provided the rationale for judgments made and for accepting those judgments.

He feels like you're a professional that you can go and sit down and talk with the parent, sit down and talk with the teachers in consultation, coordinate whatever program. You get it worked out.

But ultimately he makes the decision about whatever should be going on if there is some problem with a kid...That means, "you are the counselor but I'm taking the ultimate fall here." As he's told me in the past, "If there's any flak, you tell them to see me." So, we work together. I appreciate him letting me be a professional, and, for many things, I appreciate him being the "fall guy."

And, you know, [sometimes] there's just a disappointment in the way he disciplines...but, you know, you have to make those administrative decisions about things...he has to make a decision about what's best for the student body.

Just as the counselor was an advocate for the students, the principal was an advocate for the counselor. There was an expression of rejoinder (i.e., appreciation) by the principal as support for the counselor.

As a school counselor relating to the staff and building rapport with the staff that [the principal] has really been the advocate for me as far as like, "You don't know how many people like you, and respect you, you know? Just continue to do..." And I appreciate him doing things like that, so in that way, he's been an advocate for me.

If there's a part of the program that he really doesn't like once you submit it, he'll let you know, but, generally, he's very supportive of what you do.

The expression of rejoinder was stated in terms of "he heard me out."

From the counselor's statements, the building manager was an administrator who extended this regard to multiple publics (e.g., counselors, parents, teachers).

Even in a conference with a parent, he gives way to everybody to be able to say what they need to say, and, of course, I am included in that.

Judgments made by the service provider (i.e., counselor) were guided by a similar regard (i.e., to listen).

People make such rash decisions about everything rather than look at the whole picture. Now, I don't have a whole lot of time like I would like to really investigate some things, but I try to with anybody that I deal with. I try to hear people out, and then make the decision.

As the interview moved into closure, an insightful metaphor emerged from the counselor's comments stated as "up under the mask."

Making sure that we go up under the mask that many, many kids have. The mask that many adults or teachers have...once they sit down and just start talking and they let me up under the mask, I see why...And that comes with time...actually putting some time in.

*So, the story seemed to be about* the evolving professional perspective that became the service provider's personal guidelines that are illuminated by judgments made when interacting with multiple publics. The service provider structured a consumer maintenance franchise to fit and support the homebase guidelines. To understand the conceptualization of being a responsible student

advocate, one must get "up under the mask" and listen to the examples of confrontation, arbitration, and collaboration utilized by the counselor that are guided by an insightful advocate empathy. The resulting professional perspective seemed to be the intertwining of structural and personal perspectives into personal guidelines that "come from the heart."

### **Phase 3. Interview 3 (P303)**

The participant was a white female who has worked in three different school systems as a school counselor. In her current middle school setting, she has worked with seven different principals and five different assistant principals. The counselor was one of two participants in the study with more than ten years of school counseling experience. In addition to her years of experience, the participant has completed the course work for her doctorate but has not completed a research study and dissertation.

The office area consisted of two counselor offices and a reception area that was occupied by a secretary and various pieces of furniture. Upon entering the reception area, there was a large work table with metal chairs, and, at the back of the reception area, there was a secretarial work station. Inside the door was a bookcase filled with reference materials for students and beside the bookcase was a large sofa. At the back of the reception area were two doors that led to individual counselor's offices.

The counselor's office was illuminated by the overhead fluorescent lighting. There was one narrow window set into the far wall that was partially



covered by a filing cabinet. The counselor's desk and chair were next to the filing cabinet. There were various inspirational posters taped to the walls. Citing from a fieldnote

The furniture surfaces including the counselor's desk are cluttered with papers and books. There does not appear to be any order to the clutter. There are two chairs, in addition to the counselor's swivel chair, which include a wooden ladder-back student chair and a sitting chair with velvet-flocked upholstery covering the back and seat.

As I followed [the counselor] into her office, she pulled the sitting chair out for me and then suggested I use the student chair for the tape recorder. [She] grasped the arms of the swivel chair so that she could lower herself into the chair. She turned to her desk to collect the two forms (i.e., consent form and participant questionnaire) which she extended to me.

The first impression of the counselor was "disheveled and labored." A fieldnote provided insight

Her hair probably had not been combed since morning, her support hose had fallen down around her ankles, and she moved with great effort. I could hear her heavy breathing probably from the excess weight she carries though maybe there is a respiratory problem.

The impression of the office "also was disheveled and labored...with papers and books everywhere that were neither stacked nor ordered in any apparent way." The researcher was surprised when the counselor had the two interview forms "ready and conveniently located on the top of a stack of papers in the middle of the desk." The fieldnote continued

She had indicated for me to sit in the velvet-flocked chair. It seemed so out of place in this office but, once I sat down, I was comfortable. She provided another chair for the tape recorder to sit on, and I sensed her interest in the interview as she asked "Now, what exactly are you doing with this research? You know, I completed all the course work for my doctorate. You're interviewing school counselors?" Which launched me into my interview protocol.

The lead question for the interview was "what factors determine the school counseling program?" In the context of this study, the concept of determining the school counseling program was seen as franchise structuring. The participant's initial response to the question was related to her past experiences.

When I came here 15 years ago, I had a wide experience. I had been a counselor...I had directed the Upward Bound project, and I had finished my course work for my doctorate...So, I had a lot of experience. I worked for the neighborhood Youth Corps...so, I had a real strong sense of what a guidance program should be.

Her response also included the influence of the building manager (i.e., principal) with regard to approval and input for franchise structuring.

We set up our own schedule and our own activities with the principal's approval and sometimes input from the leadership team.

We have been able to have a good overall guidance program because [the principal] lets us. The principals have let us develop it. Once in a while you'll have one that tries to put a rein on you and has a little bit different opinion of what you are supposed to be about. Some of them are a little more cooperative and supportive than others.

In speaking about her previous building managers (i.e., principals), the participant mentioned that she had worked with seven different principals and

five different assistant principals. Her perception was that "we would be farther had we had some continuity in our administrators." The stress placed on a counselor to adjust to the frequent change in administrators was that one had "to adjust to the various personalities...I mean, it does take a while to know them."

When speaking about franchise structuring, the themes about building managers were to have independence (i.e., "free rein"), affirmation (i.e., approval), rejoinder (i.e., feedback), and sustenance (i.e., support).

The first principal here had been a counselor himself, and so he let me pretty much develop the program, and he knew what a good counselor was.

Here we have free rein. Pretty much free rein.

He liked what I did about going to the homes and involving the parents, and this kind of thing.

She liked all the different programs that we did and involving the parents.

I never know when he's going to give me some really nice compliment. Like when I got the award, I got a beautiful note from him.

[The principal] was generally supportive of counseling, and she sort of just let me do my own thing.

He was supportive of me and just whatever I wanted. I set up the guidance program at that school from scratch. When Southern Association came, they wrote across the [report] "outstanding guidance program." So, I've never forgotten that.

But, almost without exception, they have let us develop our own program. And I don't think that is always true. I've talked with other counselors, and they're doing a lot of administrative work.

The participant's comments about franchise structuring were an evolving perspective that began with the ingredients (i.e., components) of her structural position (i.e., role) that were related to the homebase guidelines (i.e., school curriculum).

And, of course now, Guilford County has said that we will have an achievement component. That is one of our focuses.

Well, I believe that since I first became a counselor, if you can get a child feeling good about school work, they have fewer [problems]. When you're in a school setting, that's got to be a factor, because if a child is frustrated he is going to have emotional problems. So, I wish that we could have more impact on curriculum...I think counselors should be able to impact on [curriculum].

I see the counselor as being a person that starts new programs that relates to the overall program in school.

It concerns me that we've lost some of the education...because [the students] don't get to see how it all connects. I think that is a little bit of the role of the counselor.

But anyway, [orientation] is one thing that we do every year to make [the students] feel a part. And I see that as a very important guidance role.

The counselor summarized her view of the structural position as

I guess that all those experiences made me see that the key is to make sure the student knows about the resources. To be supportive and help them get help for their emotional concerns. To me, that is the key role, and if you can help a child see what's out there and offer him support, or her support...I see all that as a role of the counselor to do whatever it takes to see that child utilize his or her potential.

The evolving perspective has led this counselor to a "guiding focus," and, through an extensive analysis of the data, the concept of personal guidelines was revealed. For this counselor, "hooking" students with resources was the guiding focus.

Making sure that these resources, the in-school resources, the parents, the community are hooked. That those things are pulled together to help the child. I see the counselor as being like a facilitator to see that happens. That's how I see it.

To enable the counselor to "pull those things together," judgments (i.e., decisions) must be made. Judgments result from a blending of influences. In this particular setting, there are two school counselors, a county-wide central administration supervisor, and a principal. The structural influences included the county focus (i.e., student achievement), the school focus (i.e., assignment of the counselor to a grade level), and the collaboration between the two school counselors.

And now, in Guilford County schools, the four year plans for eighth graders.

Well, we do have like, this was decided by the principal, that we will do it by grade level. So, I have all the eighth graders, so I can pretty much do eighth grade stuff...then sixth grade we pretty much [do together].

There are some things we do overall, like the Career Day we did together [and] the Soar to Success night. The registrations, we planned that, the elementary registrations, and the in-house registrations, we planned that. The big things we plan together. So, we do some things together and some things individually. That works out pretty good from that respect.

The personal influences or perspectives were the "guiding focus" in making judgments. The personal perspectives included the evolving perspective from an array of experiences, knowing one's community for "hooking" resources, and the multiple publics (e.g., teachers) that comprise the homebase (i.e., particular school).

When I first became a counselor, it was like 25 % needed individual help, and now it's just the opposite. Now it's 75 % need individual, and 25 % maybe you can deal with in groups.

I'm very big on parent involvement...I'm also big on having community resources...so, utilizing community resources is a very important part.

I think that making [students] aware of what's out there is very important. It's also that you provide role models with these career speakers. You can see the connections.

I'd say that a counselor has to get out of the office, and go out in, you know, help do some community things. A lot of contact with teachers. I talk with them. I do it informally.

*So, the story seemed to be about the evolving professional perspective of the service provider as a program orchestrator who has a "guiding focus" for making judgments (i.e., decisions) about franchise structuring (i.e., developing the school counseling program). "Hooking students and resources" was seen as the guiding focus for this service provider. The blending of influences included both a structural perspective, based on structural guidelines from the building manager (i.e., principal) and system manager (i.e., central administration supervisor), and a personal perspective, based on one's experience and philosophy. Importance was*

placed on receiving independence (i.e., "free rein"), affirmation (i.e., approval), rejoinder (i.e., feedback), and sustenance (i.e., support) from the building manager. The "counselor as being like a facilitator" was the theme.

To me that's advocacy. Making sure that these resources, the in-school resources, the parents, the community are hooked. That those things are pulled together to help the child.

### **Phase 3, Interview 4 (P304)**

Interview four was with an African-American female school counselor, and the second participant with more than ten years of experience in school counseling. She has remained at the same school site during her tenure as a middle school counselor and has worked with two principals. The fieldnote described the counselor as

...an attractive older woman who takes great care in her appearance. She is wearing a pastel print dress and a complementary pastel colored jacket. Her white shoes are low-heeled. Her coiffure frames her face and is neatly arranged. Her movements are slow and deliberate conveying no haste in her actions. Even her speech pattern is slow and deliberate as she draws out her words and sentences.

The school building was set off of a secondary road in an open area that was surrounded by woods. The school was formerly a part of the city school system that was consolidated into a county school system. The building and grounds were well cared for as evidenced by maintenance personnel at work as the researcher arrived for the appointment. The researcher's fieldnote described the school further.

A display case in the main lobby was filled with student artwork. The office consisted of a large reception area, a high counter separating the reception area from the secretarial area, and work stations for the two secretaries.

When I walked into the office, one of the secretaries immediately addressed me, "May I help you?" I explained that I had a 9:00 a.m. appointment with the school counselor. The secretary stepped back to her desk to place a call, and I was informed that [the counselor] would be with me shortly.

I waited fifteen minutes at which time the secretary took me back to the counselor's office which is located down a hallway beyond the reception area. At the door, [the counselor] stood up from her desk and came forward with her hand extended. I shook her hand and thanked her for agreeing to participate in the research study. She indicated for me to take the seat next to her desk.

The counselor's office walls were painted white, and there was one long narrow window. The surfaces of the office furniture held a variety of reference books, pictures of her family, files placed in organizers, as well as a computer and printer. Her desk held the computer monitor and keyboard, a file organizer, phone, pencil/pen holder, and numerous files stacked in the middle of the desk pad. Throughout the interview, the counselor rested her right hand on top of the files on her desk, and her left hand was either in her lap or in her left jacket pocket. A fieldnote recorded the initiation of the interview.

As I arranged the tape recorder on the back corner of her desk, she handed me the two forms (i.e., consent form and participant questionnaire). The protocol flows smoothly, and we are into the interview.



The counselor's response to the question "what factors determine the school counseling program?" was that "I'm not, of course, at liberty to make all the decisions about it." Franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program) was seen as making a plan prior to the beginning of the school year that included a structural appraisal (i.e., needs assessment).

What we've always done is do the needs assessment surveys right off at the beginning of the school year, and then we always had regular meetings right at the beginning of the school. We have teacher work-days, and that day was a lot of time to get some of this taken care of in terms of who's going to do what, and how are we going to get this done, and the time lines, and you know, people that we need to contact, and the resources and all of that.

And then at some point in one of our meetings, we will sit down and tally [the needs assessment surveys] and see where we need to put the emphasis. We then write up a yearly plan for the whole department and indicate which one of us will do what, when, how, when it's to be completed, and all that.

The structural appraisal included input from teachers, students, and parents. The structural appraisal provided information regarding the perceived essentials (i.e., needs) of the primary consumers (i.e., students).

We involve the teachers at the beginning of the year. They decide through a needs assessment survey what kinds of programs they feel that their particular students will need. The students indicate their concerns on the needs assessment, and the parents indicate theirs on a needs assessment. It's not what I think the kids ought to have, but it's a conglomeration of all of these factors.

The "conglomeration of all of these factors" was coded as the blending of influences and included the structural appraisals, directives, and the service provider's (i.e., school counselor's) "understanding of some basic things that [the students] need."

There are some directives that we have to follow that come as a directive for counseling for the school system. And then there are some that are in the course of study for each teacher related to guidance that the principal expects us to assist with. And then the rest of it we kind of decide based on our knowledge of the developmental stages that these kids are going through.

When reflecting on her experiences as a school counselor, the participant provided an example of a novice (i.e., first year) service provider learning from experience the necessity of making a plan. In this example, the novice was the alternate service provider (i.e., other school counselor) currently employed with the participant at the school.

But this year we didn't quite get off to the right start...she said that she was just anxious to get on with it. That she didn't want to waste the time to do the planning, and organizing, and all that...I accepted that and went on with what I would normally have done. So, this has been an unusual year. I suspect, though, that she has learned that she does need that planning time, and that maybe next fall we will go back to the usual way.

The directives mentioned by the participant were initially defined as "a directive for counseling for the school system" based on a directive from the State Department. In addition, directives were made by the building manager (i.e., principal). Directives given by the building manager were coded into three

categories, namely directed (i.e., "told what to do"), responded (i.e., "requested to do"), and relied (i.e., "counselors know what to do").

We have had a principal in the past [who] told us in some instances what we were going to do.

Yes, which is not to say that he doesn't make requests, you know, and that you don't get these little notes in your box. Because, obviously, you know, you'll have that.

The principal that we have now pretty much takes the position that we're trained and know what it is we're supposed to do, and he trusts us to do it.

Administrative directives may come from either a building manager (i.e., principal) or an alternate building manager (i.e., assistant principal).

Over the years we've had about eight assistant principals. But of course they give you things to do, too, and they have input, too. So, it's not just the principal although obviously the principal has more authority than the assistant principals. But as far as we're concerned, they're all administrators, and so you have to defer to each of them.

Judgments (i.e., decisions) were made when dealing with directives that the counselor "felt that was not the way to do it." In the case of one building manager, the service provider spoke up about her concerns over the process instituted by the administrator.

He failed to respond to my request...what he was responding to was "O.K., I have the counselors here because the kids need to see the counselor, but you'll see them [when I say]." And then finally he let up but [the directives] continued until that principal left here.

The counselor was complacent in her judgments related to this particular principal.

You know you're not going to speak up because you're going to get your head chopped off. And you learn that after the first couple of times you spoke up, you learned to keep your mouth closed.

The building manager's perception of the service provider contributed to both directives and judgments. Previous personal experience as a school counselor did not necessarily provide insights for an administrator.

So, his having had experience [as a school counselor] he could use [it] to influence and direct us positively for the benefit of the kids, but he also could sometimes use that as an excuse for being very prohibitive.

[His school counseling experience] was his defense whenever we argued with him. But, at the same time, it was also a weapon he used against us.

So, in other words, he wanted to say, "I've been a counselor, I've been to these conventions and workshops, and they're a bunch of bull, so you don't need to go, and I'm not letting you go."

The duration (i.e., length of time) and experiences of the participant have contributed to her self-conceptualization (i.e., personal guidelines). Personal guidelines for this counselor have evolved from a structural perspective (i.e., training) intertwining with her personal perspective (i.e., "my personality"). Evolving conceptual issues presented in schools today continue to shape this participant's perspective.

I was right fresh out of the program and was really aware of some of the counseling theories that I had learned and things like that...as the time went by, I became more and more eclectic, and I decided somehow at some point more of my personality and less of my formal training came into play.

But I'm just saying that over the years, lots of things happened and changed as the system changed, and, of course, I changed, too.

I have come to know more about the deep seated anger and the hostility and violence that it produces...because there was such a great lack of love and caring early on in the child's development. And it is the love and caring that they get now that helps to heal...so, naturally, that's the kind of thing we try to do now...But I'm just saying, I've evolved just like society has evolved, and the issues have changed over the years.

*So, the story seemed to be about the self-conceptualization of the service provider which was viewed as the personal guidelines that were an intertwining of the structural perspective and personal perspective. The intertwining was an evolving process from being a novice who gained experience over time and resulted in one's personal guidelines that were evidenced in judgments that were made. Judgments were the blending of influences that included input (e.g., structural appraisals, directives) and perceptions (i.e., of the service provider and of the building manager). The building manager's perception of the service provider may be 1) someone I direct, 2) someone I make requests to, or 3) someone I rely on to make judgments. The blending of influences was used for franchise structuring that included interactions with building managers and cognitions for evolving conceptual issues impacting primary consumers (i.e., students) in schools today.*

I have matured. I think I have become more understanding, more patient...I really worry about them more than I used to. I used to think that some of the things they went through were just normal for growing up. But it is so hard now to figure out a way to get all of them to live until they grow up.

### **Phase 3, Interview 5 (P305)**

The fifth interview was with a white male, middle school counselor who has nine years of school counseling experience. He has been employed by two school systems and has worked with two principals (i.e., one male and one female). In both middle school settings, there were two counselors providing services. The participant's current school was administered by a female principal who planned and supervised the construction of the school five years ago. The researcher's descriptive and reflective fieldnotes captured the setting as follows:

It was a bright, sun-shining morning as I drove "out into the country" for my appointment. I passed fields with huge sprinkler systems, farmers riding in massive machinery tending the fields, and few homes. I passed the elementary school which is within one mile of the middle school. I could see the high school across an open field as I pulled into the car park of the middle school.

There were two distinct entrances into the school. An entrance from the side of the building was accessible from the staff parking area and opened into a lobby that was brightly lit through expansive glass windows. Large potted floor plants were arranged in the lobby area. This lobby separated the office wing (i.e., administration and counseling) from the student wing (i.e., classrooms, gymnasium, cafeteria). The other entrance was from the front of the building

and was accessible from the visitors and handicapped parking area. A large sign beside the access road at the front of the school announced school bus loading and unloading times. The front entrance opened into a lobby that separated the offices for administration and counseling.

The "front" offices are on either side of a wide entrance lobby. The administration offices consist of a reception area separated from the secretarial work area by a high counter and an administration area (i.e., principal and assistant principal) located down a hallway beyond the secretarial work area. The walls are white and various large framed paintings depicting children hang on the walls. Live plants and table lamps are arranged on the counter and tables. The carpeting and accessories are color coordinated around a country-blue theme.

On the other side of the lobby were the counselors' offices.

The counselors' offices consist of a reception area that has a secretarial work station with a sitting area and four offices (i.e., two counselors, visiting school psychologist, counseling intern) accessible from the reception area. The walls are painted white with large framed pictures and a clock at eye level. The school video monitor is in one corner above the secretary's desk. The sitting area contains two sofas separated by a large twig basket filled with student-made "visitor's guides" to [the city] and [the school]. The carpeting and accessories are color coordinated around a country-blue theme.

The interview was scheduled for 8 o'clock in the morning, which was prior to the students' arrival at school. The researcher arrived fifteen minutes early and found that the school office staff had not yet arrived. The reflective fieldnotes recorded the researcher's entrance into the school.

When I entered the building, I immediately went to the main office but there were no secretaries in the office, so I went across the lobby to the counseling office where there was no secretary. I could hear papers being shuffled in the direction of [the counselor's] office so I settled myself onto a sofa and skimmed through the student-made visitor's guides.

As I was debating on what to do about announcing myself, a student came into the office and walked directly into [the counselor's] office requesting a pass for his appointment later that day. As he left, I said "hello" which seemed to trigger the appearance of [the counselor]. It was obvious that he had been unaware that I had arrived. It struck me from his comments that he did not like feeling as though he had neglected me. Maybe I should have announced myself as soon as I had arrived? [The counselor] moved quickly, and, coupled with his slight frame, I assume that he tends to be hyper. His response when he saw me was "My gosh, how long have you been sitting there? Do come in. I've just been organizing a few things for today. I hope you haven't been waiting long. Do come in."

The office was arranged so that resource materials were easily accessible to the counselor sitting at the desk. A variety of books, manuals, and notebooks were neatly organized in two bookcases behind the desk. A large leafy plant was situated on top of the filing cabinet that was in one corner. The counselor's desk was placed perpendicular to the far wall, and the counselor's certificates (i.e., counseling degree, National Certified Counselor, American Counseling Association) hung on the wall over the desk. There were two sitting chairs at the side of the counselor's desk, and this furniture arrangement allowed the counselor to move his chair in closer proximity of the researcher's location in the sitting chair during the session.

I took the seat closest to the door, and [the counselor] sat in his chair which he moved in closer proximity to me. He handed me the two completed forms (i.e., participant questionnaire, consent form) and then



rested his elbows on the arms of his chair. I had the feeling he was ready to begin. After reviewing the interview protocol, I posed the question, "what factors determine your school counseling program?"

Franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program) was the blending of influences that included a structural appraisal (i.e., needs assessment), manager directives (i.e., counseling supervisor, principal), and colleague stimulus (i.e., other school counselors). The structural appraisal, although usually completed in the fall, sometimes was completed at the end of the school year as a final status of the services provided.

We've done it at two different times at this school. But for four years we have done that in the fall. We've also done it at the end of the year like "what do you feel we could have addressed?"

But when we get to the end of the year, like I said, we were sitting there looking back and kind of projecting for next year, and what do we want to do differently. Or, let's say if we didn't get to everything we planned, then we decide what we need to do differently. The majority of it is at the beginning, but there is quite a bit towards the end of the year.

The structural appraisal was drawn from multiple publics (i.e., students, parents, teachers) and was used as a guideline for the homebase essentials (i.e., needs at that school).

We do a survey of the [students, parents, and teachers] to kind of figure out what it is they think we need to address. And then we take that information as far as structuring.

The manager directives were from two sources, namely the system manager (i.e., central administration supervisor) and the building manager (i.e., principal). These directives were requirements expected by the respective manager of the service providers (i.e., school counselors) to be incorporated into the school counseling program.

We also get a lot of information from the counseling supervisor, and she says that there are certain things that have got to be done in school.

[The principal] assigns a lot of things, for instance, like scheduling conferences for teachers...but that's one thing that she feels like we need to do, or she assigns us other duties which everyone has as far as committees that you're on.

The directives were viewed by the counselor as accountability benchmarks and a necessary component to make a plan as part of franchise structuring.

It's not saying that we all have to be doing it in the same month, it's just kind of a plan.

I don't feel like I've ever been asked to do anything that was not what a counselor should be doing. As a matter of fact...they ask us to do things that counselors should be doing. Accountability is important, and if everybody else knows these are things that you need to be doing, I think it could free you up to get away from some of the other things that they've got us doing.

The counselor viewed making a plan for the year as his need for structure and to know his responsibilities.

Part of this may be my need for structure but to kind of know our responsibilities and know where we're headed.

Through making a plan and knowing his responsibilities, the counselor has set up a means of informing the managers and of being accountable for franchise structuring.

I do make her aware of what we're doing. What we both do for our principals is we give them a copy of our unit plan, and we send in monthly reports to our counseling supervisor. We give the principal or whoever is evaluating us a copy of the monthly report. It also gives them some numbers of what we've done. I think sometimes with principals, when it's hard for them to understand what we're doing, they can understand numbers.

The counselor has worked with an alternate service provider (i.e., another school counselor) in both settings where he has been employed. The experiences have given him two different perspectives in working with another professional. The researcher asked, "what process do you go through in making determinations on what is offered in the counseling program?"

We sit down and figure [the program] out...we kind of look at what we feel are our strengths, or, if it's a new program that we want to start, how can we divide the responsibilities. Also, it's a sense of fairness.

But she and I were talking the other day [about how] we've been working some together within the same grade level. It's like we're in this together. And we thought we might try that approach more often. So, for us, that's how we've done it, but we can change it.

The differences between service providers (i.e., school counselors) can be a strength for franchise structuring and ultimately for the primary consumers (i.e., students).

We talk about ideas or "what are you doing? or "what worked with you in class?" Because we both have very different styles, but if we see something that's helpful, we share it.

Right now I feel like we have a really good team, and I would hate to lose that. In some ways we're different, in some ways we're alike, but we're really different in our approach, and I just really think that this is a strength for our program and for our school, for the students. We feel comfortable enough approaching each other.

Differences between service providers also can be a hindrance (i.e., frustration). Reflecting on such interactions brought to light the participant's professional multi-faceted growth (i.e., professional development).

I worked with a co-counselor...who had been there 30 years, and it's like they always have a certain grade. They're THE senior counselor. Oh, yes, there are some things that you don't touch...and there was just no negotiating...You don't feel like you're on a team.

I guess that's why I had to know what I was responsible for. So that I'll know that I'm doing a good job.

It was really hard to think that here are two counselors and here is this person who was not willing to give anything. And if they're not willing to, you just didn't talk about it. [So] I stayed really busy. That's kind of my nature anyway. I'm real hyper. I stayed really busy at work...But it worked out okay.

These were examples of experiences in maneuvering (i.e., working through) challenging (i.e., difficult) interactions that had brought about a state of (un)ease (i.e., discomfort) for the counselor. In this case, the counselor employed a strategy identified as "cut-your-losses" (i.e., know when to let go) that has become a part of his professional multi-faceted growth.

I had one other friend that was a counselor, and I would call her when I got home because she understood the situation, and I'd say, "You're just not going to believe this." You know, that was a different situation.

I was writing in my journal every night. It was so bad...I hated that job, but I needed to earn a living. The one good thing is when it was over, I could look back and see how much I had grown. I knew that I had done what I needed to do, and I needed to leave.

The participant provided further insight as he spoke about his various experiences as a school counselor. These experiences have ranged from internship and novice (i.e., beginning) experiences through on-the-job-training (i.e., OJT) and future (i.e., morrow) perspectives as his evolving personal guidelines came to light.

When you do your internship, the majority of your time is doing individual counseling. Although, like when I have interns, I really do everything I can to get them in group [counseling] and classroom guidance. I feel like we're trained to do [individual counseling] although I don't feel that you get a lot of training in counseling programs for classroom guidance. You kind of learn that by the seat of your pants.

Initially, I definitely started out [not doing] heavy, heavy individual [counseling] because that's where you spend so much of your time in internship. And, so initially that's where I thought [counseling] would be and teachers [would] refer. Then you get stuck because if you stay in that office and just do individual [counseling], "Well, he's in the office, we'll let him do this paperwork and that paperwork."

I kind of began to feel out things and know how things should be done. I heard all the great things that [counselors] were doing in [another county], and I'd try to do them in my school.

Quite frankly, I don't have the time for as many [individual counseling sessions] as I would like, so that is a major change. [Now] it is a more balanced approach. In the beginning, it was individual [counseling] primarily and then maybe a little classroom and very few small groups. The last couple years it's started getting [more balanced].

Initially, there was no program. It was all we could do to see the kids individually...and trying to figure out who the kids are and who I'm working with. It took us a while to get our program going. But I think we've come leaps and bounds. We keep adding things that we want to do ...and we've kind of got goals with things we want to keep doing, refining.

The counselor's personal guidelines have evolved from these various experiences. He recognized that "I can tell you all the things that I do, and I know what I'm supposed to do as a school counselor, but there's this big side of me over here that is all the other expectations that people have of you." It was the expectations of multiple publics that teased out what was identified as the counselor's concern with his personal rating (i.e., how I think I have done).

I know that I can never do enough to please them. Because I also know that there are always some things that I want to be doing. That I'm not yet there. That I'm never quite there. It's really hard for me. I don't think that I'll ever get to the point where I can say "I'm there." I feel like I'm getting there, but I don't think that I'll ever get there.

And then I start thinking, "Gosh, my program is not what it could be." I'm doing so many other things, but then I'm thinking, "Well, my program is lacking," and I feel like I'm lacking, or I'm not measuring up personally.

I don't know why, but I'm about to be in tears thinking about it. I don't know why. It's weird. I think it's that "not measuring up."

*So, the story seemed to be about* the service provider's professional multifaceted growth as he experienced challenges where the action and interaction strategies were to maneuver, to be in a state of (un)ease, or to avoid that has resulted in his personal guidelines. These personal guidelines were the intertwining of the structural perspective and personal perspective. The structural

perspective was the blending of influences that included professional accountability and multiple publics' perspective. The personal perspective was the blending of influences that included the service provider's concerns and development. The personal guidelines were the basis for judgments made for franchise structuring and personal rating by the service provider. A further dimension of personal guidelines was illuminated in this interview that was the dimension of professional personal attachment.

I really like what I do. I mean, this is like the neatest job. You know there are days that are harder...but it's just a really neat job. But it's more than just a job.

I know what I'm supposed to do and the kind of services that I'm supposed to provide. But it's so hard sometimes to measure impact. We don't have ways to measure the whole spectrum of counseling...you just have to kind of know sometimes that you're doing what's right. You're doing a good job. Sometimes it shows up later, much later.

### **Phase 3. Interview 6 (P306)**

The final interview in phase three of the research study was with a white female school counselor completing her first year in a middle school setting. She was in her late 20s and had been employed with Head Start for five years prior to obtaining her qualification as a school counselor. There were two school counselors providing services at this middle school. The participant's co-counselor had more than ten years of school counseling experience. The building was administered by a principal and an assistant principal.

The school was located in a suburban area that included two traffic arteries leading into the city, an interstate expressway, and various shopping centers. The building was set off of a secondary road in an open field surrounded by woods and residential areas. Playing fields were located to one side and behind the school. The main entrance into the building faced the parking area for staff and visitors.

After parking the car in front of the school, I checked my watch and realized that I had arrived ten minutes early. I went directly to the main office and waited by the counter for a secretary to finish with a student who was requesting to use the phone. As I introduced myself and my purpose at the school, the secretary seemed aware of my appointment and stepped back to her desk to phone [the counselor]. I was informed that [the counselor] was with a student and to have a seat. I leafed through the school newsletters with information on the end of the school year, about athletics, and summer activities for students. As I finished reading the second newsletter, the secretary informed me "you can step back to [the counselor's] office, do you know where that is?" I answered, "yes," and walked down the hallway. [The counselor] met me at her office door.

The counselor's office walls were painted white and were decorated with a dried flower wreath, a large framed poster, and a clock. There was a large area rug on the floor, and the furniture was arranged along the walls. The desk was cluttered with files, papers, books, and a bag containing her breakfast.

[The counselor] shook my hand and guided me to the chair located by her desk. She sat in the swivel chair, sipped coffee from a Styrofoam cup, and pushed the "pile" of papers toward the back of the desk. I commented on the breakfast bag and encouraged her to eat her breakfast while I set up the equipment and reviewed the interview protocol. With one hand she reached for the bag and with the other hand reached for the two forms (i.e., consent form, participant questionnaire). I timed my comments to



coincide with her finishing breakfast, and, as she disposed of the food bag, I thanked her for participating and giving of her valuable time.

The initial question, "what factors determine your school counseling program?," evoked comments regarding the legacy (i.e., what existed) of the homebase franchise (i.e., school counseling program). The legacy included the former service provider (i.e., school counselor), alternate service provider (i.e., co-counselor), and the knowledge brokers (i.e., teachers).

I think that being a new counselor, it has been pretty difficult trying to get a feel for the students and the program that already existed here.

It has been difficult...the person who was here before me was here for twenty years...and there was a set way [of doing things] before I came here.

There was a struggle within this department because I was new coming in, and I was looked upon as being "the kid." [The other counselor] was used to doing things in a certain way, and she was used to having [the previous counselor] here.

Some of the teachers were confused because there hadn't been a lot of counseling before. They were like "what is going on?" Some of the teachers really don't have a concept of why we're here, and what our job is, and that we're here to help them.

The challenges (i.e., difficulties, problems) faced by a novice service provider (i.e., first year school counselor) were entailing the legacy, setting the precedents, determining accountability, and lacking tenure. The challenges were hindrances (i.e., frustrations) and obstructions (i.e., barriers) in providing professional services to the primary consumers (i.e., students).

The most important thing to me is seeing the children and counseling with the children. The biggest thing to me, as I see my job, is to see the students.

I've determined my number one thing is just to see the kids, and try to work out the paperwork and all the other things that come into play that I have to do. It's been tough...It is accountability. The different kinds of projects that are given to me.

As a first year school counselor, the participant was aware of the impact that tenure and duration in the position have on defining one's role. The lack of tenure was a challenge to the service provider from within the position as viewed by herself and from without as others viewed the position. In particular, the view of the building manager (i.e., principal) was an influence with regards to the structural position rating (i.e., job evaluation).

It's been really hard to try to determine because the paperwork is how I'm going to be reviewed by the principal. Not just the kids.

If a principal gives you an assignment and I'm in a position where I don't have any tenure, then there's not that much that I can do about it.

I know if I put up too much fight, that I could be fired. I want to pick my battles.

Although the building manager directed (i.e., told to do) "the different kind of projects that are given to me," the participant viewed the building manager as "hands off of everything." Her perception of the alternate building manager (i.e., assistant principal), however, was different.

That [the principal] is not really involved, and that he is kind of in his own little shell, in his own little world. That's how I perceive it. I believe that if it worked, he would be happy to see new programs and things like that.

The assistant principal recognizes that we are very busy, and that we have a lot of things to do because he is in this general area.

The "hardest adjustment" encountered by the participant was working with another service provider who has tenure and seniority. Relaying information (i.e., communication) and developing an understanding (i.e., cognition) were cited for dealing with this challenge.

I would say that [working with another counselor] has been the hardest adjustment. Things have gotten better, and we have really gotten to a point now that I think that we've come to an understanding in that we can communicate better.

We have come to an understanding, but we will not ever see things in the same way. We just won't.

Things have gotten better with her because I have stood up on several occasions. But it's always going to be like that to a certain extent...We had a long conversation the other day, and she was telling me about how she has no tact, and I said, "You're right, you don't." We talked about it. I feel like it's getting better.

Interactions with multiple publics (e.g., principal, teachers) involved the service provider being directed into various structural positions (i.e., other roles), responding to non-professional requests (i.e., interruptions), and lacking cognition (i.e., lack understanding) from the multiple publics of the professional services available.

The other factors that have existed as far as testing [and AG], that was something that was given to me [by the principal]. So, some of that stuff has just been put on me.

When I came in I was the new person...I was called and the principal said, "I need you to do [AG]." And then later on I realized how much work, how much time is spent. So, being a new person, it was "here, take this, and take this, and take this."

I can't really work with the kids the way I want to because of all the interruptions. Sometimes, even if I have a "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door, I'll have a teacher come knock on the door. A teacher, and it will be about some stuff that could have definitely waited. When there's an interruption, it breaks concentration.

[We need] to let the other people in the system know that this is what we're here for. That we are not here to do all their paperwork or set up teacher conferences like a secretary. I don't think people [in the system] really recognize that we are a valuable part.

Some teachers have the perception that "yes, school counselors just sit in their office and they write notes or talk on the phone or whatever."

At the final status (i.e., end of year), the adjectives she used to describe her experience were "tired" and "overwhelmed."

I don't know because I'm tired. I'm just tired. I really don't know because I've been torn about how much I can actually do.

This year I've been overwhelmed. I've just been trying to keep myself together. I feel like I don't have any control, or very much control or power, over things. I feel like I can't do very much because of the position that I'm in.

A year of experience (i.e., on-the-job-training or OJT) in the substance (i.e., real stuff) of the profession had led the participant to discover (i.e., realize)

and modify (i.e., adjust) her conjecture (i.e., knowing it was going to be like that) of the structural position (i.e., role).

I just think that I didn't have a full understanding of what this position [as a school counselor] was until I was actually in it...I wonder if it's first year, or if it's just this job that I don't feel like I've accomplished anything.

When I came in, this whole desk was filled with career stuff. It was filled with all the university pamphlets and things like that, and I thought, "What has been going on?" Basically [we learned in school] that a long time ago, it was the counselor's job to help kids with their career, to help kids get ready for school, for college, and lead them on their way. And I wanted to throw the stuff out because this is not mine, this is not what my push is going to be.

I think when I first came in compared to now, that I do see changes because I came in with a pretty unrealistic attitude, well not attitude, but view. I thought that I was going to be able to do a lot more than what I've actually done.

But you know, [the teachers and principal] don't understand. They don't get it. So, it has been an adjustment.

The personal perspective that has emerged for the counselor seemed to be about "drawing the line" and defining the role. It was the personal guidelines that the service provider has followed in making judgments (i.e., decisions) and making a plan (i.e., develop) that has evolved as a strategy for franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program).

But I felt like I needed to set my own agenda because some of the things that [the co-counselor] wanted to do, I'm just not going to do. I have a different way of thinking than she does as far as what my role is.

The first thing I really want to do [before next year] is to talk with the principal and let him know some of the duties that I'm doing now that I

just don't feel I can do next year and still be effective...I would like to be able to plan the programs that I want so that I can implement them during the school year. That is one thing that I really did learn.

So, talking to the principal, and organizing and planning are the biggest things that I would like to change for next year.

The accountability in her role also has evolved. She expressed accountability as viewed both by herself personally and as viewed by the multiple publics. The counselor articulated the structural position (i.e., role) as being a necessary homebase entity (i.e., valuable member of the school).

I would like the staff to recognize that my purpose here is to serve the kids, and that I am a valuable member of the school. The teachers are starting to come to me, some of them, and ask questions about kids.

I always feel like I have to be seen doing something really busy, always doing something, so that I will be looked upon in a professional way.

I sometimes think, "Gosh, have I failed this year?" And then I look at the things that have happened and the other duties that I've had, and I think that I just looked at it in an unrealistic way when I first came in. I think all the things that I want to do can be done, but it has to be put in priority, and a few other things you just let it go. But it has to be planned, too.

*So, the story seemed to be about* a novice service provider dealing with the challenges of the environment that initiated an evolving personal perspective.

The intertwining of the personal perspective with her structural perspective initiated the personal guidelines for making judgments and being accountable.

The hindrances and obstructions encountered arose from the lack of tenure and the lack of substance in the profession. Being personally responsible, the novice

identified strategies for relaying information, making a plan, and organizing priorities as a responsible student advocate.

I just hope there will be a day that comes where counselors are looked up to as valuable and really seen in that way in order to help the kids that are here because there are so many needy children.

In summary, data from the six interviews completed in phase three of the study underwent the rigorous coding procedures that were presented in Chapter III and resulted in the findings presented in this section. The words of the participants were used to illuminate the concepts that emerged from the coding process. As indicated by the words and phrases underlined, central themes related to role performance have been identified. These central themes have led to the major theoretical categories that are presented in the next section.

### **Theoretical Categories**

A grounded theory orientation allows the theoretical categories to emerge that explain how a problem is continually processed by the participants (Glaser, 1992). The emerging categories from this study were identified through the theoretical coding of the data. The substantive theory describes an interrelated set of categories grounded in the data that have emerged from constant comparative coding and analysis procedures.

The substantive theory for personal guidelines centers around the core category, namely blending of influences, and its major theoretical categories. It was discovered that the major theoretical categories generated from the data in

this study represent the context, conditions, and phases of the core category. Each of these will be described in subsequent sections of this chapter.

The basic problem grounded in the data was the counselor's need for personal guidelines in carrying out the professional role. Personal guidelines refer to the self-conceptualization of the role as a school counselor. Professional interactions were explored as defining experiences to illuminate the self-conceptualization as counselors became involved in using their personal guidelines. School counselors utilize their personal guidelines through a process that was identified as the blending of influences (i.e., core category). The blending of influences was a process for utilizing personal guidelines in the context of elementary and middle school counseling. In this section, the context, conditions, phases, and core category will be discussed.

### **Context for Blending of Influences**

The context refers to the social world of individuals engaged in the phenomenon and is the overriding scope under which a set of related categories occur (Chenitz, 1986; Glaser, 1992). In this study, context was the school setting in which each participant carried out the blending of influences process. The three phases of the research study have focused on the context of elementary and middle school counseling.

The conditions that led to the occurrence of the phenomenon in a context of elementary and middle school counseling emerged from the data during the coding procedures. Conditions may be causal, contextual, and/or intervening. It



was found that three conditions had a bearing on the occurrence of the phenomenon, namely experience, number of service providers, and essentials in a particular context. These conditions are described below.

### **Conditions for Blending of Influences**

Conditions refer to the events or incidents that lead to the occurrence or development of a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Antecedent or causal conditions, as they are sometimes called, denote those events, happenings, or incidents that seem to precede a phenomenon. Performing in the role of a school counselor was the overall condition for the blending of influences process. Performing was influenced by three factors, namely experience (i.e., length of service, previous knowledge), the number of service providers (i.e., number of counselors), and the essentials (i.e., needs of students and/or principals) in a particular setting.

**Experience.** The factor of experience encompassed length of service and previous knowledge. Length of service was the years of experience as a school counselor that ranged from one year to more than ten years for the participants in the study. From the novice (i.e., completing first year) to the seasoned counselor (i.e., more than 10 years), length of service was seen as a condition in the blending of influences process. For example, the participant completing her first year as a school counselor found that making decisions was directly related to experience.

P306: I have not been able to make too many decisions...I had no idea that you couldn't see kids during those [testing] days. You know you can't see kids that week, so that is something that I learned...Now I recognize how much work there is, and that I'm going to have to make other accommodations for [seeing students].

Another facet of experience was having previous knowledge. Previous knowledge was comprised of knowing the legacy (i.e., what has been done before) and knowing the setting (i.e., school community, counseling directives). Whether the participant had one or more years of experience, knowing the legacy was a facet of the causal condition experience for the blending of influences.

P302: I guess because I'm the newer one here, things that have worked for my partner have been tried and true, and I'm the "new kid" and I'm always saying, "But let's try this and let's do this."

P303: That if you've done something and it worked, then it's hard to see a reason to change it. Well, see, that makes you think, do we really want to change that [program] when it's worked so well?

Previous knowledge also included knowing the setting (i.e., school community and counseling directives):

P301: [Knowing the families] and their socio-economic background...A lot of single parents, a lot of children that have not been exposed to any type of learning situation before they enter kindergarten...I would say that [the program] has changed [over the years] ...I'm doing less classroom guidance than I used to do...I'm needed so much individually...I guess I've gotten a little bit more comfortable with saying "this is within my realm, and this is not what I'm here for and there's somebody else." Every year is a little different.

P304: It's not what I think the kids ought to have, but it's a conglomeration of [many] factors. The directive for counseling, the

State Department, parents, students, teachers, and then an understanding of some basic things that [the students] need. So, all that is considered in determining what's going on that particular year.

**Number of service providers.** Participants in the study were providing services to students in the school either as the only counselor or as one of two counselors. This condition was expressed in terms of time and responsibilities. A counselor who did not have a co-counselor found time to be a concern.

P301: There is a limit to what I can do for them...A lot of it has to do with how much time I have. There's so many things that I would really want to do, but it's hard not having a [co-counselor].

A counselor who had a co-counselor found the division of responsibilities to be an asset.

P305: So, instead of having 30 teachers coming at us, we [each] have 15. They know [which counselor] the kids are working with [so] they know who to touch base with.

The sharing of responsibilities was perceived from different perspectives by novice and seasoned counselors. As expressed by a first-year counselor:

P306: I would say that [working with a co-counselor] has been the hardest adjustment...At the beginning when I came in she had to apologize to me. She said, "I know I'm treating you like an intern, but you're younger than my oldest kid."...It's almost like she has been upset because there have been more [students] back here than before...And it's almost like she got upset because she wanted me to just come to her and say, "What do we do?"

And as expressed by a counselor with more than ten years of experience:

P304: We each have a grade level and then we share one grade level. Sometimes if there was a particular thing that one of us felt more ill at ease about, the other one might say, "Well, there's nothing to that. I'll come in and help you with that."

**Essentials.** A third condition when performing the role as a school counselor was identified as essentials. Essentials was the code word for participant references to needs. The participants referred to the needs as developmental issues or as directives issued by the principal or the counseling supervisor (i.e., central administration).

P302: [We] work on grade levels. I have seventh graders this year. I move with my kids, therefore, we get to know each other, and I can assess the maturity level, the developmental tasks that they have already worked through and some of the things that they have not yet worked through. And even the parents as far as what kind of parenting skills they have, and it is very individual.

P303: I have an overall responsibility to make sure that whatever we're doing, is pushing that child towards, I don't like using this term but, self actualization. Whether it be their academics, or their behavior, or their emotions.

P305: One year the principal came in and said, "I want you to cover sexual harassment with all the different grades."

Essentials may be viewed differently by co-counselors:

P302: Because my perception of a certain situation, or a problem, or a kid may be totally different from [my co-counselor's] perception.

Directives also were facets of the conditions for performing the role to meet the needs of the primary consumers (i.e., students). The participants named the principal and counseling supervisor as individuals giving directives.

Counselors' view of the principal's directives ranged from "if it works, he is happy" to "you do this ." One participant, who had worked with seven different principals during her tenure as a counselor, summarized her experience of principal directives as "almost without exception, they have let us develop our own program."

Directives from the counseling supervisor were most frequently mentioned by participants when describing the process of franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program).

P301: ...and the administration all have different ideas about what my role is here. So, I kind of try to find something that is common between all of those and tie it all together...I know that [the counseling supervisor's] expectation is for me to have a plan.

P302: We're asked to submit to our supervisor on a monthly basis some things that we do.

Performing in the role of a school counselor was the condition that precedes the process for the blending of influences. The condition of performing in the role was influenced by experience, number of service providers, and essentials in a particular context. Analysis also revealed that the process for blending of influences consisted of phases that represent the phenomenon.

### **Phases for Blending of Influences**

The four phases in the blending of influences for school counselors are described in terms of processes and subprocesses. The processes represent the strategies for the respective categories, for example, the phase of structuring has as its processes defining and rating. The subprocesses are the activities counselors are involved with in a given process, for example, appraising structure, receiving rejoinder, and evaluating self are activities utilized by school counselors in the process of rating which falls under the phase of structuring.

The major theoretical categories of the phenomenon represent the phases for the blending of influences in the context of elementary and middle school counseling. Each of the four phases for the blending of influences are described in terms of their processes and subprocesses in this section of the chapter. The processes and subprocesses in the phases for the blending of influences are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

The Processes and Subprocesses in the Phases for the Blending of Influences

Phases	Processes	Subprocesses
Structuring	Defining	Implementing training received, knowing directives, recognizing homebase timbre, informing multiple publics
	Rating	Appraising structure, receiving rejoinder, evaluating self
Interacting	Managing	Maneuvering hindrances and obstructions, making judgments, identifying a strategy
	Responding	Recognizing realm of services, intervening information to multiple publics
Distinguishing	Advocating	Focusing on essentials to safeguard, counter, and/or broker
	Accounting	Asserting professional responsibility, performing approvingly
Evolving	Sustaining	Experiencing challenges, learning on the job, forming cognition
	Intertwining	Reflecting professional substance, tying together as tongue-and-groove, developing a guiding focus

**Structuring.** The structural perspectives or external components of the self-conceptualization were identified as the category structuring. The structuring phase involved two major processes, namely defining and rating the role as school counselor. The structural defining was based on one's training and directives that were personified by recognizing the homebase timbre (i.e., tone of the school) and by informing multiple publics. The structural rating included evaluations by others and by one's self through appraisals and rejoinders (i.e., feedback).

The process of defining was most often used to respond to the initial interview question, what factors determine the school counseling program? The majority of the counselors defined their role in franchise structuring as the training they had received and the directives they are given. Some of the participants also recognized the timbre of their particular setting. Other participants felt that information both to and from multiple publics was important in defining the factors that determine the school counseling program.

In many cases, implementing their training was incorporated in their responses for structuring. What was coded as the "4 Cs" (i.e., counseling, consulting, coordinating, classroom guidance) reflected the implementation of the training that the counselor had received. Examples include:

P302: When I got into school counseling, of course, the book knowledge says that your surroundings, the type of children, the staff that's there, the community, and that kind of thing.



P303: O.K., you need the counseling component, you need the group and classroom component, you need services to parents, and you need programs.

P306: And then the rest of it we kind of decide based on our knowledge of the developmental stages and what these kids are going through.

Knowing the directives issued either by the principal or the counseling supervisor were cited by every participant as part of defining their role.

P306: The other factors that have existed, that was something that was given to me [by the principal].

P304: There are some directives that we have to follow that come as a directive for counseling for the school system.

P305: We also get a lot of information from the counseling supervisor, and she says that there are certain things that have got to be done in school.

Recognizing the homebase timbre included the tone of the school set both by the principal and by the population being served.

P302: I've worked through several principals. They set the tone [of the school]. They're the ones that determine [the program].

P301: Overall, I really do try to take a look at the population that I'm working with and what kinds of needs their families have. Where they're coming from.

Informing multiple publics was a two-way communication subprocess.

Gathering information and disseminating information both were necessary for defining the role. The multiple publics involved in the two-way informing

subprocess included the principal, assistant principal, teachers, co-counselor, and other school counselors.

P301: I also look at what the teachers are expecting me to do...what the parents want from me, or just kind of educating them about why I'm here or what I can do. And then for the teachers, too, it's taken me a long time to get them to kind of understand what my role is.

P302: Just sitting down with your partner, I think, and just saying, "What do we need?" or "What are we going to do jointly?"

P303: So, I think it's important for a counselor to know the community of the school and interact with people that aren't just like them...A lot of contact with teachers. I talk with them. I do it informally.

P305: Monthly meetings are important because you kind of get an idea of what needs to be going on...what's important. I get to hear from other middle school people what they're doing.

The process of rating was used by the counselors to appraise the structure of the program, receive rejoinder (i.e., feedback), and evaluate themselves in the role. The majority of the participants used a needs assessment with multiple publics (i.e., students, teachers, administrators, parents) to identify what to offer and to rate what had been offered in the counseling program. The need for feedback, which was coded as rejoinder, was frequently mentioned by the counselors as another subprocess. The self-evaluation by each counselor was the third subprocess of rating.

In the study, appraising the structure was a common activity used by the counselors. It was the seasoned counselors who identified needs assessment as the most widespread form of appraising structure.

P306: [The teachers] decide through a needs assessment survey what kinds of programs they feel that their particular students will need. The students indicate their concerns [on a needs assessment] and the parents indicate theirs and all together...What we've always done is the needs assessment surveys right off at the beginning of the school year...[to] see where we need to put the emphasis.

Feedback became more important as the years of service as a school counselor increased. In particular, positive feedback was sought out by the counselors. Throughout the open coding procedures, feedback was coded as rejoinder. A counselor with four years of experience voiced her need for rejoinder as:

P301: I get no feedback [from the counseling supervisor]. She has never stepped foot in my office. I've invited her to special things [which have] to do with things that she says are important [but] absolutely nothing. I even got a thank you note [from an administrator for elementary principals] which really made my year. I photocopied it and sent that to [the counseling supervisor] and I said, "This really meant a lot to me."

And from a counselor with over ten years of experience:

P303: I remember when I got that letter from [the principal] for the [PTA award], and that was really nice...I set up the guidance program at that school from scratch. When Southern Association came, they wrote across the [report] "outstanding guidance program." I've never forgotten that.

The participants' self evaluation ranged from self-critical to accepting. It appeared that maturation corresponded to a more accepting view of one's self in the role performance. The novice counselor was the most critical of her performance.

P306: I don't feel like I'm getting as much accomplished as I could somewhere else...and I wonder if it's first year, or if it's just this job that I don't feel like I've accomplished anything.

One of the counselors with more than ten years of experience evaluated herself as:

P304: I think I'm about as effective as anybody else...I've done lots of things that were wrong over the years. I'm sure [I've learned] from the mistakes...Things have changed, and, yes, I have not remained the same. And then, too, I've aged.

In summary, the structuring phase for the blending of influences was characterized by two processes: defining and rating. Implementing training received, knowing directives, recognizing homebase timbre, and informing multiple publics were important subprocesses that counselors used to define the structural perspective of their role. The process of rating involved appraising structure, receiving rejoinder, and evaluating self. The structuring phase initiated the next phase for blending of influences, namely interacting.

**Interacting.** The second major category for the blending of influences was identified as interacting. During the open coding procedures of each interview, interactions emerged as an inherent aspect in the role performance of school counselors. The multiple publics with which the counselor interacts include principals, assistant principals, teachers, co-counselors, students, and parents. Interacting with these multiple publics entailed the processes of managing and responding. The phase of interacting follows the structural

perspective of the self-conceptualization as the counselor becomes involved with personalizing the role through the initiation of a personal perspective. The onset of a personal perspective marks the beginnings of the internalization of the role as the counselor manages and responds to the blending of influences.

The process of managing was dynamic and involved multiple subprocesses. By choosing to manage interactions, counselors develop an internalization of the role. Maneuvering hindrances and obstructions, making judgments, and identifying a strategy were seen as subprocesses of managing the role as a school counselor.

Hindrances and obstructions were mentioned by every participant in the study. Examples of hindrances and obstructions included time constraints (e.g., "there's not enough time"), lack of support (e.g., "we need an advocate"), and administrative tasks (e.g., "all the paperwork"). Frustrations and interruptions were the two most frequently coded examples of hindrances. Barriers to one's role were coded as obstructions. The differentiation between a hindrance and a barrier in the coding was a matter of degree and was determined by asking, "Is this a frustration or a barrier?" Hindrances and obstructions together were viewed from the action of maneuvering. In the cases where hindrances and obstructions were maneuvered, a process of making judgments was performed. Judgments for maneuvering ranged from complacency to vigilance and were reflections of an internal or personal perspective in the choices made. In managing interactions, identifying a strategy for the judgment

was a subprocess. The process of managing fell along a continuum from "do nothing" to "make a plan."

P303: The principal told me, "I'll let you do this [program], but I'll give you enough rope to hang yourself." After [the program] was over, he came over and he told me, "I did not have one critical phone call."

P304: [The principal said], "This is what you're going to do." And then we'd have to do that, whatever it was...So, every Tuesday and Thursday we were out of our offices, and no one could find us because we had about four teams [to meet with]. I mean there's nothing wrong with the meetings, but it just takes a lot of your time.

P306: Because I get so frustrated with the paperwork. I mean, look at my desk. Look at it!

One counselor made a plan during the course of the research interview to maneuver the hindrance she had been dealing with throughout the school year.

P306: The first thing I really want to do before the end of the year is to really talk to the principal and really let him know some of the duties that I'm doing now that I just don't feel I can do next year and be effective. That's the number one thing to really let him know that...Then I want to be able to plan the programs that I want so that I can implement them during the school year...So, talking to the principal and organizing and planning are the biggest things that I would like to change for next year.

One particular point made by some of the counselors was maneuvering the lack of professional status as viewed by colleagues.

P301: I think [the principal] really does believe that I'm competent, and that I know what I'm doing. He doesn't place the same value on the counselor at the school as the counselor at Mental Health or the

counselor in private practice...I'm still called "guidance." Even as many times as I tell him, "Please try to consider me as the mental health person in your school. The person that's trained, and qualified, and willing to do it."

P306: I would like to be looked on as a valued member [of the school] ...I've heard people say, "The counselors, what a pie job, what an easy job" and they don't know...I always feel like I have to be seen doing something really busy, always doing something, so that I will be looked upon in a professional way.

The process of responding was built from the personal recognition of "what I can do" that was communicated to the multiple publics and was the second process in the interacting phase.

P305: I had enough sense to kind of initiate [classroom guidance] on my own...Once I kind of began to feel out things and knowing how things should be done...All the expectations that people have of you whether it's a teacher, the principal, or whatever...I know that I'm supposed to be doing individual, small groups, and that kind of thing, but I know that the teachers have another expectation. There's a lot of expectation like "fix this discipline problem" that I can't handle.

The first step in responding was recognizing the realm of services that a counselor can provide. The counselor may move to the next subprocess that was intervening the information to the multiple publics. In other words, letting others know "what I can do."

P301: I'd rather go to the teacher or go to the grade level meetings and sit down with them and talk about "What are you doing this year?" I kind of have it set in my mind the things that I think [the students] need to know about and what my role is in the school...It is really important to me what the teachers want from me, but it's even more important for me to be able to tell them what I can offer.

To a novice school counselor, intervening with multiple publics can be a daunting prospect. In particular, intervening with individuals in positions of authority (i.e., principal) was stressful. The novice counselor indicated a quandary as to how she would move forward in the process of responding:

P306: I don't know where the lines are drawn, whether I should say [to the principal], "O.K., look this is not part of my duty" and risk being reprimanded and told "Look, you're going to do whatever I tell you to do." And then again I think, "This is setting the pattern for my years as a school counselor." So, I've really struggled [with what to do]. I don't know what to do or how to approach [the principal] about that.

Tenure as a counselor did not necessarily correlate to the subprocess of intervening information, which was the case with one seasoned school counselor.

P304: But this year, [the co-counselor and I] didn't get quite get off to the right start. I thought that we had agreed [to spend time planning together], but, then as soon as the kids came, that just sort of fell apart somehow. When we talked about it, it seemed she was just anxious to get on with it...I accepted that and went on with what I would normally have done.

In summary, the phase of interacting internalized the role through the blending of influences process. The phase was characterized by the processes of managing and responding. In choosing to maneuver hindrances and obstructions, counselors were making judgments and identifying strategies to manage various interactions. The process of responding involved recognizing one's realm of services and intervening information with multiple publics.



**Distinguishing.** The third phase was identified as distinguishing. It was the phase where counselors expressed "what" as advocating in the role and "how" as accounting (i.e., accountability) for the role. The process of advocacy was focused on essentials (i.e., needs). Some counselors in their advocacy were "hooking students with resources" while others were "responding to problems and/or needs." The process of accounting in one's role was expressed in various ways such as "that's what worked before," "I initiated that and now all the other schools are doing it," and "I do as I am told." To some counselors, accounting was how others viewed the counselor (i.e., distinguished approvingly). The processes of distinguishing were the "what" and "how" of role performance.

The process of advocating was the counselor's focus on essentials (i.e., needs) in performing the role. Counselors were focused to safeguard (i.e., prevent), counter (i.e., react), and/or broker (i.e., coordinate) for the primary consumers' (i.e., students) essentials. In most cases, the focus in advocating for students was a combination of safeguard and counter in the performance of the role as a school counselor. Examples of a safeguard focus would be:

P301: I just try to take into account what [administration] wants, what the teachers are doing, and doing a needs assessment for the whole school ...what kinds of situations the children are coming from, and that's where I focus...I just kind of look at what they're going to be doing ten years from now, and how I can kind of help them get ready for that.

- P302: But always, I think, in the back of our minds is, "What's going to be best for the students?" When we have a whole school activity, it's generally for the benefit of optimizing the student achievement of course, but also for the emotional help or offering parenting tips.
- P304: You address that need, but you can do it with that particular student individually, whereas if you have some concern or some need that is brought up by many people as you're going through the surveys, then perhaps some of that could be covered in group work.
- P305: There are some things that every school needs to be doing...Everybody does them. Everybody is giving the same services...And then there are other things the we cover, and that's pretty much on account of we want this to be addressed. There are other things that we try to do preventive.
- P306: That we're here to help [the teachers]. We want the kids in class, but we have to see the kids all day...We're here to help them so maybe [the kids] wouldn't be acting out in the classroom.

Examples of a counter focus would be:

- P301: I feel like I'm putting out fires a lot of time...A lot of times I am reactive and I'm not proud to say that but I think I do a good job in the way that I react.
- P304: [With that principal] all we were doing was seeing in-school suspension kids. [Now] most of the interactions that I have with students and parents and teachers are because there is a perceived problem.

An example of a brokering focus would be:

- P303: To me, that's advocacy, making sure that these resources--the in-school resources, the parents, the community--are hooked. That those things are pulled together to help the child. I see the counselor as being like a facilitator to see that happens.

The process of accounting was both asserting professional responsibility (i.e., internal or personal perspective) and performing approvingly (i.e., external perspective). These subprocesses represent two ends of a continuum, namely "what I think" and "what others think." Most counselors appear in the mid-range as personal responsibility was combined with approval by others.

P301: And [the teacher] said, "I just feel like you're pulled in so many directions. We just need you." It was a real compliment, in a way, then, in a way, it was just kind of like, "god, I'm trying so hard, and they're still not happy with it."

This counselor continued later in the interview with:

P301: I really do get the sense, the longer I'm here, that [mental health counseling with students] is what the teachers want [from me]...they would appreciate that. At first I was trying to go along with what I was told counselors do and seeing what the other counselors in the county were doing. And hearing, too, from my supervisor of what I'm supposed to be doing...All the things that I will do, but I don't know how I'm supposed to do it all...I have gotten more to the point of doing what I think is best and not really worrying about what's going on with the county.

Some counselors' concern for accountability provided a strong link between personal responsibility and approval by others:

P305: Accountability is important, and, if everybody else knows the things you need to be doing, I think it could free you up to get away from some of the other things that they've got us doing...I had to know what I was responsible for, so that I'll know I'm doing a good job ... "How do I see myself?" That's really hard because I always worry about what other people think, and I know I can never do enough to please them...Because I know that there are always some things

that I want to be doing that I'm not yet [doing]. I'm never quite there...and I feel like I'm lacking, or I'm not measuring up personally.

In the case of one of the most experienced counselors, the process of accounting as asserting professional responsibility was based on what she had done in the past.

P303: I had a lot of experience, so, I had a real strong sense of what a guidance program should be...I initiated a program...I was the first counselor to give the county a college day for middle school students...I initiated a letter...I see the counselor as being a person that starts new programs that relate to the overall program in the school...Something I've instigated, and now everybody does this program.

In summary, the phase of distinguishing was the "what" and "how" of the role in the blending of influences. "What" were the essentials a counselor utilized as the focus for role performance, and "how" were the perceptions by both self and others in performing the role.

**Evolving.** The fourth phase for the blending of influences was entitled evolving. The participants spoke of the difference in their role performance between being a novice and being an experienced counselor with phrases such as "I have matured" and "I've become more conservative." The phase of evolving in the counselor's role followed the previous phases of structuring, interacting, and distinguishing.

Two processes were identified in the evolving phase, namely sustaining and intertwining. The sustaining process was the impact of experiencing challenges and learning on the job (i.e., OJT) from which the participants formed a cognition (i.e., understanding) as a school counselor. Challenges to the structural perspective (i.e., "what they didn't teach me") contributed to the counselor forming a personal perspective. The process of intertwining the structural perspective with the personal perspective as "the real stuff of school counseling" was utilized to form a fit, which was coded tongue-and-groove, for the role performance of the counselor. The intertwining process funneled into forming a guiding focus for the counselor. It was through the guiding focus that the counselor's personal guidelines were revealed.

The process of sustaining evolves from the managing process in the phase of interacting. The subprocesses of experiencing challenges, obtaining training on-the-job, and forming cognition were instrumental for the participants. The challenges (i.e., difficulties and/or problems) experienced were from a personal perspective. It was through the process of sustaining that counselors' personal perspective was developed.

The subprocess of experiencing challenges was for many counselors recognizing "that's just the job."

P301: I just have to drop whatever I'm doing and come back to it later on. So, a lot of times I'm pulled, and I don't even know that I'm going to be pulled away, and that's just part of the job. That's not going to get any better, I don't think.

P303: So, you have to sort through those kinds of things and do what you feel is right for the student. And it's not always a popular position.

P304: So, it's not just the principal [who gives you things to do] although obviously the principal has more authority than the assistant principals. But as far as we're concerned, they're all administrators, so you have to defer to each of them.

P305: I hated that [previous school counseling] job, but I needed to earn a living. The one good thing is when it was over, I could look back and see how much I had grown.

The training obtained on-the-job provided the counselor with "what has worked" as much as "what didn't work."

P301: But I think every year is a little different. I just keep learning more about different areas. I'm being trained while I'm here...I guess it's true in any job that you learn more about what you need to know once you get there...I've learned to work around [the principal]. I've just learned I have to catch him when ever I need him...Learning where his strength is and learning how I can best utilize him.

P302: You giving it a try anyway, and, if that doesn't work, it doesn't work. We'll scrap it and we'll do something different next time.

P303: I wish I could have done more this year. But I've gotten a little gun shy about taking [students] off campus because of the liabilities.

P305: The [co-counselor] was going through a lot of changes, and she was moody. Then knowing that there were things that were just her [counseling] territory. I just stayed really busy. B but it worked out O.K.

In forming cognitions, each counselor was expressing "how I see it."

P301: Sometimes I'll do [a counseling component] with a couple of grade levels and see how it goes, and if it goes well, then I'll go ahead and

adapt it to other grade levels...I know my job is not clear cut, but, to me, it ought to be mental issues, and social issues, and family issues...I get a lot of energy from the kids because I think, "Are they going to look back and remember this?" I just think that it's going to make a difference for them later on.

P302: I can remember when [the students] came in as sixth graders and remember problems from then and look at what's happening now. It is built on what happened last year, or what baggage they came in here with, or something new, some new problem...I think that one of the greatest roles that I can do is to be an advocate and an active listener for [the students].

P303: When I first became a counselor, it was like 25 % [of the students] needed individual help, and now it's just the opposite. Now, It's 75 % need individual, and 25 % maybe you can deal with in groups.

P304: Sometimes I would use of the [co-counselor's] techniques, and then sometimes I'd think, "Hey, I could do that better," and I'd use my own [techniques]...I've evolved just like society has evolved, and the issues have changed over the years...I really worry about [the students] more than I used to. I used to think that some of the things they went through were just normal for growing up, but it is so hard now to figure out a way to get all of them to live until they grow up.

As sustaining was an integration of the experiencing, learning, and forming subprocesses, the counselors moved into a process for the intertwining of the structural and personal perspectives. In other words, a process of intertwining was initiated from the personal cognitions formed out of structural experiences. The process of intertwining the structural perspective with the personal perspective consisted of reflecting professional substance (i.e., "the real stuff"), tying together as tongue-and-groove (i.e., fit), and developing a guiding focus (i.e., personal guidelines).

The subprocess of reflecting professional substance, which was "the real stuff" when performing the role of school counselor, can be contrasted between what was said by a novice counselor and a seasoned counselor. First, the novice counselor speaking about "the real stuff:"

P306: ...An internship does not show you the real stuff. It really doesn't... I don't think I want to be a school counselor anymore. This year has kind of proven to me that there are good parts and there are bad parts. But I see myself in a different way than what I'm getting here...I think I would enjoy working in another environment. Maybe in mental health. Maybe a place where you have appointments, where you're really getting to work with clients. I'm so torn because I enjoy the kids so much.

The novice counselor in the subprocess of tying together as tongue-and-groove said:

P306: This year I've been so overwhelmed. I've just been trying to keep myself together...I feel like I don't have any control or very much control or power over the things that [upset] me the most. The things that I feel like I can't do very much about because of the position that I'm in...I think when I first came in compared to now that I do see changes [in myself]. I came in with a pretty unrealistic view. I thought that I was going to be able to do a lot more than what I've actually done...I think all the things that I want to do can be done but it has to be put in priority, and a few other things you just let it go.

The novice counselor did approach the subprocess of developing a guiding focus when she shared:

P306: I believe that I can be valuable as far as classroom, groups, and individual. I enjoy the individual because there are so many kids



who cannot afford or whose parents won't take them to Mental Health, and they just need someone to talk to...I just hope that there will be a day that comes where counselor are looked up to as valuable and really seen in that way in order to help the kids that are here because there are so many needy children.

The intertwining process for the seasoned counselor also involved the three subprocesses. The subprocess of reflecting professional substance (i.e., "the real stuff") was shared by a seasoned school counselor as:

P301: I really didn't know what [school counseling] was really like. I really did believe that I would have a little office, and I would do counseling, and there would be difficult cases, but the degree to which I have to do some things is just ridiculous.

The seasoned counselor in the subprocess of tying together as tongue-and-groove spoke about the following:

P301: You know, I have become a lot more conservative in my views and in the things that I really believe the way things are. I still try to keep in mind that there is a reason for the way families are...I always want to believe that there is a chance for [children] to change and be the best that they can be and learn as much as they can. But some families are just so unable and unwilling, and I would not have said that my first year.

The seasoned counselor in the subprocess of developing a guiding focus spoke about:

P301: It's not just my job. This is a big part of my life...I don't feel like I work for Guilford County schools at all. I feel like I work for this school. If I moved to another school, I would be a different person [although] I would carry a lot with me. But the school makes who

you are in a way. You just kind of bind with that—with the building and the faculty—and that you become part of that...And so it's kind of a community thing, too. You see so many people in different places, and this is pretty much your whole life...[Being a school counselor] is always with you.

In summary, the fourth phase of evolving in the counselor's role was characterized by the processes of sustaining and intertwining. Through experiencing challenges, learning on the job, and forming cognitions, the counselors sustained their role performance which developed their individualized personal perspective. The intertwining of the structural and personal perspectives was reflected through professional substance and a tongue-and-groove fit. The intertwining process funneled into forming a guiding focus for the counselor. The guiding focus revealed the counselor's personal guidelines for carrying out the role of school counselor.

The process for the blending of influences consisted of four phases, namely structuring, interacting, distinguishing, and evolving. These four phases were described in terms of processes (i.e., strategies) and subprocesses (i.e., activities) of the school counselor performing in the role. The blending of influences was presented as a fluid, dynamic process. What follows is a description of the core category, namely the blending of influences.

### **Core Category as the Blending of Influences**

The emergence of the core category is essential to generating theory "that accounts for a pattern of behavior which is relevant and problematic for those

involved" (Glaser, 1992, p. 73). The focus of grounded theory is the core category that accounts for most of the variation in a pattern of behavior. The core category emerges from constant comparative coding and analysis of the data. Using selective coding, the major categories are related to the core category by means of context, conditions, and phases.

From the commencement of the study, the search for central themes was paramount to data analysis. The data were analyzed utilizing coding procedures and memos to identify categories in terms of properties (i.e., characteristics) and dimensions (i.e., location of a property along a continuum). Open coding generated a number of concepts such as student advocate and insightful advocate empathy which were linked to a central theme for distinguishing. Later in the analysis, the central theme of distinguishing became the category distinguishing with a process for advocating and a subprocess as focusing on essentials (i.e., safeguard, counter, broker). The data supported distinguishing as one of the major categories to describe how participants identified themselves in the performance of their role as a school counselor.

Once the major categories (i.e., structuring, interacting, distinguishing, evolving) were developed in terms of properties and dimensions, and linkages were made among the categories, the analysis focused on identifying the core category. Questions that assisted with the identification of the category included the following: What theme is reflected over and over again in the data? What do I think is the main problem that counselors are dealing with in performing

their role? Which category do all the other categories seem to lead or point toward? (Glaser, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Through the process of selective coding, the core category for the blending of influences emerged from the data.

By returning to each story from phase three of the study and reviewing the respective paragraph of "the story seems to be about," counselors were faced with multiple influences and each found a way to intertwine or blend these influences. As a process, the core category was entitled "blending of influences." Key words from these stories assisted with the identification of the processes (e.g., defining, responding, advocating, sustaining) and subprocesses (e.g., informing, maneuvering, focusing, forming) for each category. The categories, processes, and subprocesses were validated against the data, and a schema was developed that was entitled "The Processes and Subprocesses in the Phases for the Blending of Influences" (see Table 2). This schema also was validated against data previously collected during phases one and two in the first study.

Theoretical sampling was used throughout the coding procedures to identify, develop, and relate emerging concepts from the data. Certain concepts had proven theoretical relevance because they were repeatedly present or notably absent when comparing incidents, and, through the coding procedures, they earned the status of categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Theoretical sampling guided the data analysis until each major category and the core category had depth and breadth, and the relationships between them were lucid.

Data analysis was complete when the interview and observation data did not generate any new information to describe how participants performed their role as a school counselor. At this point, theoretical saturation had been reached and the categories were considered complete. The blending of influences process had theoretical saturation when the data described the context, conditions, and phases related to the core category.

The core category for the blending of influences was identified from the major categories which had emerged from the data. The categories were linked to describe how school counselors perform their role in the context of elementary and middle school counseling under the causal condition of experience, the contextual condition of number of service providers, and the intervening condition of essentials. The blending of influences accounted for much of the variation in the counselor's role performance with respect to personal guidelines.

The blending of influences emerged as a process used by school counselors in the performance of their role. The blending of influences process refers to the personal guidelines that school counselors use in carrying out their professional role. Personal guidelines refer to the self-conceptualization of the role as a school counselor. Professional interactions were explored as defining experiences to illuminate the self-conceptualization as counselors became involved in their role. The role performance was viewed as an identity that was fluid and involved the phases of structuring, interacting, distinguishing, and evolving. These phases

and their related processes and subprocesses formed the basis of the substantive theory for the blending of influences.

### **Substantive Theory for the Blending of Influences**

The problem grounded in the data of this research was to identify counselors' self-conceptualization (i.e., personal guidelines) that was a meaning-making framework in carrying out the professional role as a school counselor. Using qualitative procedures for data collection and analysis, it was discovered that the process for dealing with performing in the role of a school counselor was a process for the blending of influences.

In the research study, the blending of influences process occurred as counselors were involved with professional interactions when performing in their role in the context of elementary and middle school counseling. The process for blending of influences involved the following four phases and processes:

(a) Structuring which involved defining and rating; (b) interacting as managing and responding; (c) distinguishing which involved advocating and accounting; and (d) evolving as sustaining and intertwining. Each process was described in terms of subprocesses or activities of the school counselor performing in the role. The core category, blending of influences, and the major theoretical categories were linked through the context, conditions, and phases that described how school counselors performed their role.

The theory for the blending of influences describes the role performance of school counselors through the self-conceptualization or personal guidelines that

are utilized. The conditions within which the blending of influences occur include the experience, number of service providers, and essentials in the context of a particular setting.

Conditions from which school counselors may be viewed include experience, number of service providers, and essentials or needs in the particular setting. A school counselor in a particular setting based on years of experience may be considered a novice or seasoned counselor. The counselor's experience will contribute to his or her knowledge regarding the legacy of the setting and the timbre of the school. Within a particular setting, the counselor may be the exclusive service provider or may work with one or more co-counselors. Essentials or needs of a particular setting include the developmental issues related to the population being served and the directives related to administrators' expectations of the counselor. Given the dynamics when these conditions are intermixed, each school counselor can be viewed as a unique service provider entering the phases for the blending of influences.

School counselors, at the onset of the professional role, become involved in the phases for the blending of influences from a structural or external perspective of the self-conceptualization that is the structuring phase. Counselors may move in and out of this phase as conditions of the role change (e.g., experiences, different principal/co-counselor). This phase can be discerned through the counselors' description of franchise structuring (i.e., determining the school counseling program). In structuring the counseling program, counselors

enter the interacting phase as "influences" beyond the structural perspective surface.

Interactions with multiple publics are inherent to the role of the school counselor. The interacting phase initiates the personal or internal perspective of the self-conceptualization as counselors become involved with managing and responding to "multiple influences." Whether viewed as challenges, hindrances, and/or obstructions, the counselors maneuver the "multiple influences" and make decisions regarding their role. Through the interacting phase, the personal guidelines emerge as a meaning-making framework from which decisions or judgments are enacted.

Counselors move in and out of the distinguishing phase based on performance goals and perceptions. This phase is marked by the what and how of the "influences." As early as the novice year, counselors determine the focus (i.e., what) of their role performance and the perceptions (i.e., how) of self and others in performing the role. This phase may be revisited numerable times as conditions in the role change.

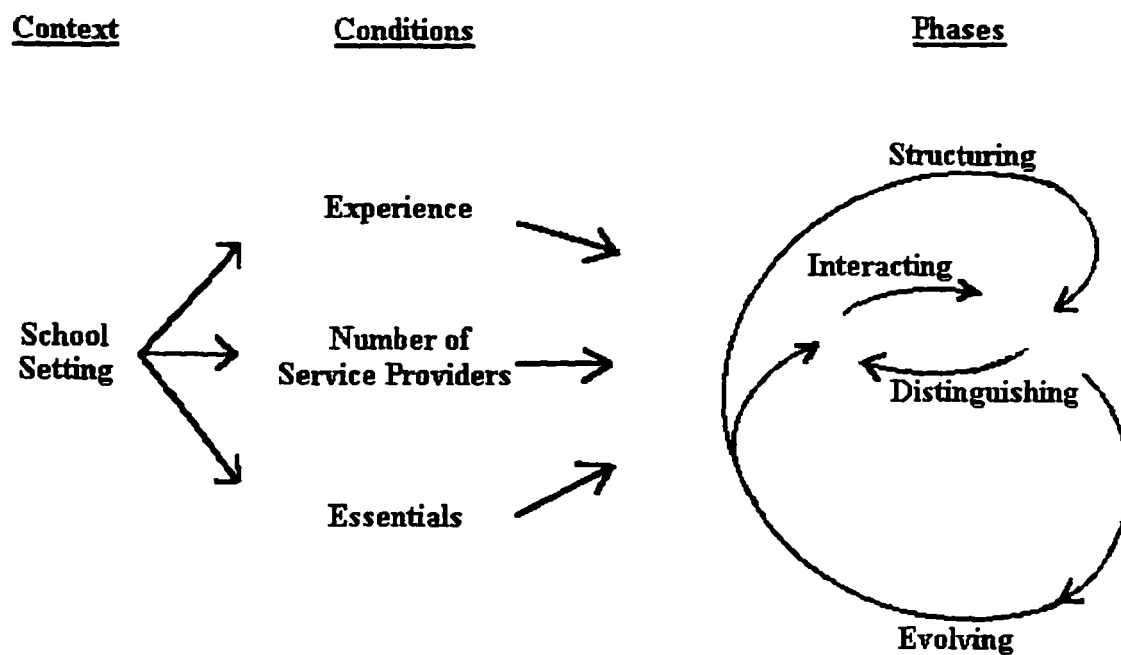
The dynamic interplay of the structuring, interacting, and distinguishing phases are precursors to the evolving phase. Sustaining a variety of experiences develops the personal perspective. The intertwining of the personal and structural perspectives weaves a guiding focus that is revealed through personal guidelines for carrying out the role as a school counselor. The evolving phase becomes a part of the interplay of the phases for blending of influences.



Describing the phases as a "dynamic interplay" represents the fluid nature of the process for the blending of influences. What is viewed as the consequences of the dynamic interplay of phases is presented as the self-conceptualization or identity of school counselors performing in the role. The identity also has a fluid nature as the conditions change and counselors become involved in the phases of the process. The identity should not be viewed as a final outcome but rather as a consequence of the conditions and phases of the process. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the context, conditions, and phases that comprise the process for the blending of influences.

The inductive approach to developing a substantive theory began with the collection of data (i.e., interviews) and built theoretical categories from relationships discovered among the data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The theory was developed to describe school counselors' role performance in professional interactions to illuminate their professional identity development. The substantive theory for the blending of influences was generated to describe how school counselors within the context of elementary and middle school counseling develop their professional identity, which is viewed as personal guidelines or self-conceptualizations. The theory fits the realities of the data collected and represents the dynamic interplay among the contexts, conditions, and phases as a process for the blending of influences.

**Figure 1.** The Substantive Theory: Process for the Blending of Influences



### **Summary**

A grounded theory is systematically and inductively generated by studying the phenomenon it represents (Glaser, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A substantive theory evolves from the study of a phenomenon or problem in one particular context (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The findings of this study provide a substantive theory for the blending of influences that describes the role performance of elementary and middle school counselors through self-conceptualizations that are the professional identities of the counselors. The process for the blending of influences takes place as a dynamic interplay within the contexts, conditions, and phases when performing in the role of a school counselor.

The basic process for the blending of influences consists of four phases and related processes: (a) structuring, that is defining and rating; (b) interacting, that is managing and responding; (c) distinguishing, that is advocating and accounting; and (d) evolving, that is sustaining and intertwining. The phases represent a dynamic interplay within the process. Specific conditions (i.e., experience, number of service providers, essentials) will have a bearing on the occurrence of the phenomenon. The context within which the process occurs provides another influence as counselors perform their role. The blending of influences process is a dynamic view of counselors' personal guidelines or self-conceptualization.

In the final chapter, the results are summarized and discussed, and the credibility of the findings are presented. Implications for practice and research also are discussed in the last chapter.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of the study was to generate a grounded theory of school counselors' professional identity development. The aims of the study were to explore and to conceptualize school counselors' professional interactions as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. The substantive theory generated from the study has described the contexts, conditions, and phases for a process identified as the blending of influences.

This final chapter is divided into five sections. The first section summarizes the major findings from this study. The second section reviews the credibility of the study using criteria presented in Chapter III. A discussion of the findings is presented in the third section. Implications of the study for practicing school counselors, training and credentialing of school counselors, and future research are presented in the fourth section. The chapter is brought to a close in the final section with a conclusion to the study.

#### **Summary**

The development of a professional identity contributes to defining the role of school counselors which shapes the counseling program and services provided to students. In providing appropriate services, counselors are involved in making

decisions, and the interactions with multiple publics (i.e., administrators, teachers, co-counselors) are particularly important. It was discovered through this study that the self-conceptualization or personal guidelines used by the school counselors to manage these interactions provided a meaning-making framework for carrying out the professional role. In managing these interactions, school counselors were involved in a process described as the blending of influences.

In a context of elementary and middle school counseling, the process for blending of influences has the following conditions: (a) experience as a novice or seasoned counselor and the knowledge of both the legacy of the setting and the timbre of the school; (b) number of counselors which may be either as an exclusive service provider or as a co-counselor working with other service providers; and (c) essentials or needs within a particular setting that include developmental issues related to the population being served and the directives related to administrators' expectations of the counselor. The basic process for the blending of influences consists of four phases and related processes:

(a) structuring, that is defining and rating; (b) interacting, that is managing and responding; (c) distinguishing, that is advocating and accounting; and (d) evolving, that is sustaining and intertwining. The phases represent a dynamic interplay within the process. As professionals perform in the role as a school counselor, their personal guidelines (i.e., self-conceptualizations) are portrayed through the blending of influences within the contexts, conditions, and phases of the process.

The substantive theory generated from the research study describes the blending of influences process. By submitting the theory to established evaluation procedures as presented in Chapter III, the credibility of the theory can be assessed.

### **Credibility of the Study**

The credibility of the study was judged by the adequacy of the research process and the judgments made about the empirical grounding of the research findings. The criteria cited by Strauss and Corbin (1990) were used to evaluate the grounded theory generated from this study.

The adequacy of the research process covers seven criteria, which were described in Chapter III, that assess the complex coding procedures used by the researcher. Five of the seven cited criteria (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 7) have been answered in the detailed presentation of findings in Chapter IV. The five criteria covered in Chapter IV include the original sample, major categories, events/incidents/actions of the categories, theoretical sampling, and core category. The remaining two criteria relate to propositions pertaining to the conceptual relationships among categories.

Conceptual relations among categories from the study were formulated and tested. These relationships included the following propositions: (a) there is a linear relationship among the phases of the process; (b) identity, as a consequence of the blending of influences process, possesses a concrete nature; and (c) there is a hierarchical relationship among the contexts, conditions, and

phases of the process. Each interview was reexamined through a comparative method to test the relationships. In each case, the propositions were shown not to be linear, concrete, and hierarchical, but rather to be reciprocal, fluid, and dynamic. These propositions led to the conceptual relationships within the theory. The resulting conceptual relations among categories included the following: (a) there is a reciprocal interplay within the process, (b) there is a fluid nature to the process as the conditions and decisions change, and (c) the phenomenon as a blending of influences is a dynamic process within the contexts, conditions, and phases for counselors performing in the role.

The adequacy of the empirical grounding of the research findings was judged by seven criteria that were described in Chapter III. The findings presented in Chapter IV, which were generated from rigorous coding procedures detailed in Chapter III, address the adequacy of the empirical grounding with regard to concepts, linkages, variation and specificity, conditions, creative interplay, and process. Concepts were generated from the data and systematically related. The conceptual linkages were presented as processes (i.e., strategies) and subprocesses (i.e., activities) of counselors performing in the role. Variation and specificity were built into the theory as conditions (i.e., experience, number of service providers, essentials) for the process. Broader conditions that effect the process under study were seen as "the settings" within which the counselors were providing services. The theory described a dynamic process for the blending of influences involving phases and actions/interactions in response to prevailing



conditions. Finally, the theoretical findings represented the creative interplay between the researcher and the data.

The double set of criteria (i.e., research process, empirical grounding) have a bearing on the issues of verifying the grounded theory study. Components of the research process that were described in Chapter IV presented the theory as a series of formulations that emerged during the research process. Given the guidelines followed throughout the research study, a judgment was made regarding the substantive theory. Under these guidelines, the research was deemed adequate, and the theory was judged to be credible.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the study was to propose a grounded theory that would contribute to an understanding of school counselors' professional identity development. The aims of the study were to explore and to conceptualize school counselors' interactions with principals from a framework of conflict decisions as defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. Three assumptions were made, namely that (a) the development of a professional identity contributed to defining the role of school counselors which shapes counseling programs and services provided to students, (b) in providing appropriate services, school counselors are involved in making decisions, and, (c) in making decisions, interactions with principals seemed particularly important.

As a result of the study, it was found that the development of a professional identity does contribute to defining the role of school counselors

which does shape the counseling programs and services provided to students. In providing appropriate services, school counselors are involved in making decisions, however, interactions are more complex than only those with principals. What was found through this study was that managing interactions with multiple publics, which include administrators, teachers, and co-counselors, are particularly important. Further, managing interactions are one part of a larger process identified as the blending of influences. As was expected, the blending of influences process was conceptualized as a dynamic interplay of internal and external perspectives, however, the resulting personal guidelines were far more individualized than initially expected. This is important because the personal guidelines followed by counselors determine the school counseling program, hence the highly individualized personal guidelines result in diverse programs and services offered to the students and to the school community.

The initial broad research question focused on identifying the factors that determine the school counseling program. What emerged was a proposition that a process of transformation occurs as the school counselor moves from determining the school counseling program based on external influences (i.e., training received) to an internalized conceptualization of the role. As a part of the transformation process, the school counselor recognizes the needs of students that may elicit challenges from multiple publics (i.e., teachers, administrators, co-counselors) which the school counselor must manage. Research questions in subsequent interviews were narrowed to identify the issues of

professional conflict and how school counselors deal with these conflicts. The emerging theory from study one was about the transformation of school counselors. Novice school counselors following a structural orientation transformed into experienced school counselors responding to challenges based on an internalized self-conceptualization of their role.

The research questions for study two focused on identifying issues of conflict with principals. It was discovered that interactions with multiple publics (i.e., administrators, teachers, co-counselors), not just the hierarchical relationship with the principal, are defining experiences in the development of a professional school counselor identity. Further, these interactions are a part of a process through which counselors blend numerous influences for determining the school counseling program. It was found that the professional identity development of school counselors mediates the programs and services provided to the students and to the school community.

Professional identity is a meaning-making framework from which school counselors determine their role and functions. This identity develops over time and is a part of an experiential and maturation process. The development of a professional identity is an individualized process for the blending of various influences that results in the personal guidelines followed by counselors when making decisions. Although the study revealed a similar process among the participants for developing a professional identity, involvement in the process was unique to each school counselor.

The study revealed that development occurs over the professional life-span. The continual development of the professional identity will reciprocally continue to mediate the counseling program and the role of the school counselor. Therefore, opportunities for continued professional development that address issues of both structural and personal perspectives are important.

Some of the assumptions made at the onset of the study were accurate. These assumptions included that (a) professional identity does contribute to defining the role of school counselors, and, (b) in providing appropriate services, school counselors are involved in making decisions. However, the third assumption that interactions with principals were particularly important was modified based on the results of the study. Although interactions with principals were important, many instances cited from the study indicated that interactions with various publics were more important in making decisions that determine the school counseling program. In particular, interactions with co-counselors challenged the internal conceptualization of the role for many school counselors. Once again, the importance of interactions with multiple publics was individualized which resulted in the personal guidelines followed by school counselors.

It is interesting to note how the results of this study support what has been reported in the literature regarding professional socialization and development. Even more interesting are the conceptualizations from the study that are specifically defined for school counselors' professional socialization and

development. These conceptualizations are presented as a model for professional school counselor identity development comprised of strategies and activities when performing in the role. Also, the dynamic interplay among the conceptualizations where shown to occur across the professional career of school counselors.

Findings from this study support what has been defined in the literature as professional socialization and development (Hall, 1987; McGowen & Hart, 1990; Watts, 1987). The literature for a number of professions (i.e., teachers, clinical psychologists, counseling psychologists, psychoanalysts) reports that professional growth and development begins during one's training for the profession, evolves during entry into the profession, and continues to develop as the practitioner identifies with the profession. This concept was true for the school counselors who participated in this study. The maturation process began with the structural perspective developed during one's graduate training and was moderated by experiences during entry into the profession. Further development occurred as each participant internalized the role that resulted in counseling services determined by individualized personal guidelines. What was illuminating was the similarity of experiences among the participants and yet the dissimilarity of how these experiences were internalized into the self-conceptualization of the role among the participants. It was the personal or internal perspective as a self-conceptualization of the role that led the participants in the current study to develop new values, attitudes, and self-identity components portrayed through each individual's personal guidelines as a school counselor.

The substantive theory for the blending of influences presents a conceptualization of professional identity development for school counselors. Previous studies have presented professional identity development as a career spectrum model (Hall, 1987), a stage model (e.g., Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992), and a tripartite model of professional socialization (Watts, 1987). The current study presents professional identity development as a dynamic interplay of phases as school counselors become involved in a variety of strategies and activities when performing in the role.

The study began with an investigation into the interactions of school counselors with principals. Interactions were central to the exploration of school counselors' role performance but what became lucid were the interactions with multiple publics. Through qualitative coding procedures, concepts emerged and were linked as a model for professional school counselor identity development. But what put life into the model was the dynamic interplay among the conceptualizations across the professional career. The findings of the study support the literature that professional identity development is not a final outcome. The substantive theory conceptualizes professional identity development of school counselors as being responsive to a variety of influences and the importance placed on those influences by the individual school counselor when performing in the role.

The designation "Professional School Counselor" as the title for individuals engaged in the practice of school counseling can be viewed through the

substantive theory for the blending of influences process. The process as evidenced by the personal guidelines contributes to defining the role of school counselors who shape counseling programs and services provided to students. Given the findings from this study, implications for the profession of school counseling extend to school counselors, to counselor educators, and to researchers.

### **Implications of the Study**

Knowing that the professional identity of school counselors mediates what and how services are delivered to the students and to the school community, the implications of this study will effect school counseling practitioners and school counseling educators in a variety of ways, namely in practice, training, credentialing, and research. In this section, the implications for practicing school counselors, training and credentialing of school counselors, and future research are discussed.

#### **Practicing School Counselors**

Implications from this study for practicing school counselors address the concept of personal guidelines by asking the following questions: (a) What are the personal guidelines for individual counselors? (b) How do individual school counselors utilize the blending of influences process in determining the program and services provided to students? In answering these questions, practitioners may develop more effective methods for developing programs and delivering services to students in the school setting. In the future, personal guidelines may

lead to questions for assessing school counseling programs and services as well as school counselors' performance, such as "How do individual school counselors assess their performance as providers of counseling services in schools as viewed through the blending of influences process?"

The phases of the process have significant implications for both novice and seasoned school counselors. The study supports programs such as mentoring (e.g., VanZandt & Perry, 1992) and academies (e.g., Splete & Grisdale, 1992) that have been instituted to support practicing school counselors. These types of programs provide a forum for counselors to share experiences from and to seek solutions for day-to-day practice. Where these types of programs are not available, experiences that provide reflective opportunities can be a means of engaging in the process for the blending of influences. Such experiences may include writing a journal, attending professional conferences, and networking with other counselors.

The importance of the interacting phase as counselors manage and respond to requests speaks to practitioners "picking their battles." School counselors' identities are formed by the decisions made when interacting with multiple publics, in particular, principals and co-counselors. Requests for school counselors to perform administrative and/or clerical tasks will continue to be made if such administrative directives are held in the same esteem as administrative directives for counseling services. This condition will impact the "blending" process with administrative and clerical tasks becoming integral



"influences" that practitioners must address. In addition, interactions between co-counselors can provide opportunities for confrontation, arbitration, and collaboration that can be seen as an integral part of the process resulting in appropriate programs and services to address the developmental needs of students.

Professional identity development is not a final outcome, rather it is an evolving perspective that spans a practitioner's professional career. The evolving phase needs to be as important to the seasoned counselor as it is to the novice counselor. Opportunities need to be made available to challenge the seasoned counselor to identify issues and to plan strategies that address conditions that are constantly changing which impact the blending of influences process. The issues faced by students in schools continue to change, and the practice of counseling continues to change as we learn more about meeting the needs of students. These changes are significant factors that have a bearing on the dynamic interplay of phases within the process.

The implications for practicing school counselors are seen as professional multi-faceted growth. Asking questions to probe the concept of personal guidelines, supporting professional growth, picking one's battles, and developing throughout one's professional career are examples that support the dynamic interplay within the blending of influences process.

### **Training and Credentialing of School Counselors**

Given that the professional identity of school counselors mediates what and how services are delivered to the students and to the school community, the influences that are a part of the process for the development of a professional identity have implications for the training of school counselors. School counselors can be prepared with a mindset that they will evolve and change in their professional role, that they will be made aware of the factors that impact their professional development, and that they will ultimately determine the counseling program and services offered within the school setting. However, many of the school counselors who participated in the study felt they were not well prepared for the reality of school counseling. This insight has implications for courses, seminars, and internships as part of the pre-professional training for school counselors.

Courses within the training program should address not only the structuring of the school counseling program but also the importance of decision making in determining the program and services. Decisions involve interacting with multiple publics which become a part of the fluid process for the blending of influences. Practicing school counselors as well as practicing principals would make excellent guest speakers in training courses to share examples of decisions and to stimulate discussions (i.e., interactions).

An innovative approach to introducing the blending of influences process to counselors in training would be seminars with other educators in training

(i.e., principals, teachers). These seminars could provide an opportunity for participants to become involved with the interacting phase as each individual will manage and respond to seminar topics related to issues in schools. In addition, seminars would provide a forum to discuss the services of the school counselor and to develop an understanding of the profession.

A review of the CACREP standards indicates a strong emphasis on the structural perspective of school counseling through specified curricular experiences that includes a required internship experience. However, the standards do not provide the same structural guidelines for supervision of the internship. Consideration should be given to develop guidelines for the supervision of internship experiences by both the host and the university supervisors. For example, the host supervisor's responsibilities would include the supervision of the intern's experiences in group counseling, classroom guidance, and consultation with teachers and parents. The university supervisor's responsibilities would include the supervision of the intern's individual counseling experiences utilizing individual and group supervision techniques. It is through the internship experience that a bridge between the training and the practice of school counseling can be provided, in other words, the reality of school counseling.

Support for a standardized certification for school counselors can be gleaned from this study. The National Certified School Counselor (i.e., NCSC) is currently available through the National Board for Certified Counselors

(i.e., NBCC). However, there is no widespread requirement of the NCSC for practitioners in the schools. A review of the guidelines and qualifications of the certification as well as continuing certification for practicing school counselors is strongly recommended. Professionalization of school counseling from the national level through certification would support reciprocity among the states, distinguish counselors from educators, and establish criteria for renewal of certification beyond entry-level criteria. A national certification is the avenue for standardized certification of school counselors among the states. Also, the national counseling certification rather than a school counseling endorsement that is generally under the auspices of a Department of Instruction within each state would differentiate counselors from teachers. Finally, national standards for re-certification could address the need for continued professional development of school counselors. The profession of school counseling should not be reactive to individual state standards that vary greatly between states. School counseling should be seen as a distinct profession with standardized certification and re-certification requirements for practice.

The implications for the training of school counselors focus on integrating the blending of influences process into internships, seminars, and courses. The importance of decision making in determining programs and services is also emphasized. The implications for the credentialing of school counselors is a recommendation to support the existing national school counseling credential.

### **Future Research**

Results of this study have produced a substantive theory for the development of a professional school counselor identity. Further exploration and conceptualization through both qualitative and quantitative methods would be advantageous. Future research should be focused on testing and refining the theory through examining relationships within the theory, collecting data from multiple publics (i.e., principals, teachers, co-counselors), and determining relationships between consequences of the process and the services provided to students.

The testing and refining of the theory is paramount to advancing the substantive theory to a mid-range theory. Research studies of other contexts (i.e., high school, rural setting, regional location, international schools) can be viewed as a long range goal of the researcher. Identifying both the similarities and the differences among the contexts would provide density to the theory. Examining the relationships between contexts, conditions, and phases in the blending of influences process would further refine the theory. The refinement of the theory may, in turn, provide a basis for more effective school counseling programs and the delivery of services to students.

In testing and refining of the theory, the consequences of the process need to be explored and conceptualized. There are numerous possibilities for the consequences that may include decision styles, program services, and personal attachment/detachment. Once conceptualized, consequences can then be

considered in relation to contexts, conditions, and phases in the blending of influences process. For example, the Conflict Decision Model (Janis & Mann, 1977) that acknowledges the diverse nature of human decision making and the impact of the situation on the process used to make a decision may be a possible conceptualization for the consequences of the process. The four frameworks (i.e., complacent, avoidant, hyper-vigilant, vigilant) may provide a means for viewing significant decisions made by school counselors.

There was an indication from this study of a "professional maturation." This concept needs to be further explored. The development across the professional life span would be an important contribution to the theory and would have implications for both practicing counselors and training programs.

Collecting data from multiple publics would be a view from "the other side of the process." Qualitative studies involving principals and teachers would focus on the origins of their perceptions of school counseling and school counselors. These insights may have implications for informing these multiple publics about school counseling in addition to on-the-job-training.

With the extensive literature on the role and function of school counselors, another study in this area certainly is not needed. However, a study to link the blending of influences process to programs and services could be enlightening. Searching for linkages between contexts, conditions, and phases that result in certain types of programs and services (e.g., developmental, directive) may help determine if it is the training or the person, or a particular blending of the

training and the person that is the critical ingredient for the blending of influences process.

Although this study produced a substantive theory, it has raised more questions than it has answered. Further research to test and refine the theory is strongly suggested. The self-conceptualization of practitioners as a particular "type" of school counselor has been shown to be directly linked to the programs and services offered to students in schools. So it follows, the beneficiaries of the blending of influences process ultimately are the students.

### **Conclusion**

The substantive theory for the blending of influences process provides a framework from which to view the professional identity development of school counselors within a context of elementary and middle schools. The "blending of influences" describes the intertwining of the structural and personal perspectives that results in the personal guidelines followed by school counseling practitioners in making decisions for the delivery of programs and services to students in schools. The interplay of conditions and phases within the context has fit the reality, given understanding, and was useful both practically and theoretically in the substantive area explored by this study.

Further research needs to be conducted to test and refine the applicability of the theory for the blending of influences process. The usefulness of this theory will be determined by how well the theory explains the blending of influences process in other substantive areas of school counseling.

## REFERENCES

- Agar, M. (1986). Speaking of ethnography. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- American Association for Counseling and Development. (1987). School counseling, a profession at risk: The report of the AACD school counseling task force. Alexandria, VA: Author.
- American Personnel and Guidance Association. (1969). The elementary school counselor in today's schools. Washington, DC: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (1964). Statement of policy for secondary school counselors and guidelines for implementation of the ASCA statement of policy of school counselors. Washington, DC: Author.
- American School Counselor Association. (1974). The role and functions of the secondary school counselor. School Counselor, 21, 380-386.
- American School Counselor Association. (1977). The role of the secondary school counselor. The School Counselor, 24, 228-234.
- American School Counselor Association. (1981). ASCA role statement: The practice of guidance and counseling by school counselors. Alexandria, VA: Author.



American School Counselor Association. (1989). ASCA role statement: The practice of guidance and counseling by school counselors. The School Counselor, 29, 7-12.

American School Counselor Association. (1990). Role statement: The school counselor. Alexandria, VA: ACA Press.

American School Counselor Association. (1995, June). Resolution adopts official title. The ASCA Counselor, 32, 3.

Amey, M. J. (1990). Bridging the gap between expectations and realities. New Directions for Higher Education, 18, 79-88.

Arkes, H. R., & Hammond, K. R. (Eds.). (1986). Judgment and decision making: An interdisciplinary reader. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Armor, D. J. (1969). The American school counselor. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Ashcraft, R. (1966). A five-state survey of counselor duties, problems, and responsibilities. The School Counselor, 13, 230-232.

Aubrey, R. F. (1977). Historical development of guidance and counseling and implications for the future. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 55, 288-295.

Baker, S. B. (1992). School counseling for the twenty-first century. New York: Macmillan.

Barret, R. L., & Schmidt, J. J. (1986). School counselor certification and supervision: Overlooked professional issues. Counselor Education and Supervision, 26, 50-55.

Blau, G. L. (1987). Using a person-environment fit model to predict job involvement and organizational commitment. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 30, 240-257.

Bloom, S. W. (1963). The doctor and his patient: A sociological interpretation. New York: Russell Sage.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Borders, L. D., & Drury, S. M. (1992). Comprehensive school counseling programs: A review for policymakers and practitioners. Journal of Counseling & Development, 70, 487-498.

Boyd, J. D., & Walter, P. B. (1975). The school counselor, the cactus, and supervision. The School Counselor, 23, 103-107.

Bretz, R. D., Jr., & Judge, T. A. (1994). Person-organization fit and the Theory of Work Adjustment: Implications for satisfaction, Tenure, and career success. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 44, 32-54.

Brown, J. A., & Pate, R. H., Jr. (1983). Being a counselor: Directions and challenges. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Brown, J. H., & Brown, C. S. (1975). Environmental management: A step toward counselor effectiveness. The School Counselor, 23, 108-113.

Bruss, K. V., & Kopala, M. (1993). Graduate school training in psychology: Its impact upon the development of professional identity. Psychotherapy, 30, 685-691.

Bucher R., & Stelling, J. G. (1977). Becoming professional. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Buckner, E. T. (1975). Accountable to whom? The counselor's dilemma. Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, 8, 187-192.

Burgess, R. G. (1984). In the field: An introduction to field research. London: Allen & Unwin.

Carlson, J., & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (1993). Counseling the adolescent: Individual, family, and school interventions. (2nd ed.). Denver, CO: Love Publishing.

Carmical, L., & Calvin, L., Jr. (1970). Functions selected by school counselors. The School Counselor, 17, 280-285.

Carroll, B. W. (1993). Perceived roles and preparation experiences of elementary counselors: Suggestions for change. Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, 27, 216-226.

Chenitz, W. C. (1986). Getting started: The research proposal for a grounded theory study. In C. W. Chenitz & J. M. Swanson (Eds.), From practice to grounded theory: Qualitative research in nursing (pp. 39-47). Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Children's Defense Fund. (1990). Children 1990: A report card, briefing book, and action primer. Washington, DC: Author.

Clawson, T. (1993). The school counselor and credentialing. In J. Wittmer (Ed.), Managing your school counseling program: K-12 developmental strategies (pp. 262-267). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media.

Cohen, H. A. (1981). The nurse's quest for a professional identity. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Cole, C. G. (1991). Counselors and administrators: A comparison of roles. NASSP Bulletin, 75, 5-13.

Conant, J. B. (1959). The American high school today. New York: McGraw Hill.

Coombs, R. H. (1979). Making it in medical school. Jamaica, NY: Spectrum.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (1994). Accreditation standards and procedures manual. Washington, DC: Author.

Coy, D. R. (1991). The role of the counselor in today's school. NASSP Bulletin, 75, 15-19.

Dawes, R. M. (1988). You can't systematize human judgment: Dyslexia. In J. Dowie & A. S. Elstein (Eds.), Professional judgment: A reader in clinical decision making (pp. 150-162). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Dawis, R. V., & Lofquist, L. H. (1984). A psychological theory of work adjustment. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Day, R. W., & Sparacio, R. T. (1980). Impediments to the role and function of school counselors. The School Counselor, 27, 270-275.

Dinkmeyer, D. (1967). Elementary school guidance and the classroom teacher. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 1, 15-26.

Eccles, J. S., Midgley, C., Wigfield, A., Buchanan, C. M., Reuman, D., Flanagan, C., & MacIver, D. (1993). Development during adolescence: The impact of stage-environment fit on young adolescents' experiences in schools and in families. American Psychologist, 48, 90-101.

Eckler-Hart, A. H. (1987). True and false self in the development of the psychotherapist. Psychotherapy, 24, 683-692.

Elkind, D. (1990). Schools take on duties once held by parents. The School Administrator, 47, 8-11.

- Enoch, Y. (1989). Change of values during socialization for a profession: An application of the marginal man theory. Human Relations, 42, 219-239.
- Etzioni, A. (1967). Mixed scanning: A third approach to decision making. Public Administration Review, 27, 385-392.
- Ford, E. S. (1963). Being and becoming a psychotherapist: The search for identity. American Journal of Psychotherapy, 17, 472-482.
- Freidson, E. (1970). Profession of medicine. New York: Dodd, Mead.
- Friedman, D., & Kaslow, N. J. (1986). The development of professional identity in psychotherapists: Six stages in the supervision process. Clinical Supervisor, 4, 29-49.
- Gibson, R. L., & Mitchell, M. H. (1986). Introduction to guidance. New York: Macmillan.
- Ginter, E. J., Scalise, J. J., & Presse, N. (1990). The elementary school counselor's role: Perceptions of teachers. The School Counselor, 38, 19-23.
- Ginzberg, E., Ginsburg, S. W., Axelrad, S., & Herma, J. L. (1951). Occupational choice: An approach to a general theory. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1978). Theoretical sensitivity. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G. (1992). Emergence vs forcing: Basics of grounded theory analysis. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. Chicago,: Aldine.

Goode, W. (1960). Encroachment, charlatanism and the emerging professions. American Sociological Review, 25, 902-914.

Gortner, S., & Schultz, P. (1988). Approaches to nursing science methods. Image, 20, 22-23.

Gottfredson, L. (1981). Circumscription and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28, 545-579.

Guba, E. G. (1978). Toward a methodology of naturalistic inquiry in educational evaluation. CSE Monograph Series in Evaluation, 8. Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California.

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. ETC, 19, 75-91.

Hackett, G., Lent, R. W., & Greenhaus, J. H. (1991). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. Academy of Management Review, 10, 76-88.

Hall, C. S., & Lindzey, G. (1970). Theories of personality. New York: Wiley, Sons.

Hall, D. T. (1987). Careers and socialization. Journal of Management, 13, 301-321.

Hall, R. H. (1968). Professionalization and bureaucratization. American Sociological Review, 33, 92-104.

Helms, B. J., & Ibrahim, F. A. (1983). A factor analytic study of parents' perceptions of the role and function of the secondary school counselor. Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, 16, 100-106.

Helms, B. J., & Ibrahim, F. A. (1985). A comparison of counselor and parent perceptions of the role and function of the secondary school counselor. The School Counselor, 32, 266-274.

Heppner, P. P. (1989). Identifying the complexities within clients' thinking and decision making. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 36, 257-259.

Herr, E. L., & Cramer, S. H. (1965). Counselor role determinants as perceived by counselor educators and school counselors. Counselor Education and Supervision, 5, 3-20.

Herr, E. L., & Cramer, S. H. (1987). Controversies in the mental health professions. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.

Hitchcock, W. L. (1953). Counselors feel they should. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 32, 72-74.



Hoffman, A. E. (1959). An analysis of counselor sub-roles. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 6, 61-67.

Hogan, R. A. (1964). Issues and approaches in supervision. Psychotherapy, Theory, Research, and Practice, 1, 139-141.

Hogarth, R. M., & Reder, M. W. (Eds.). (1986). Rational choice: The contrasts between economics and psychology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Holland, J. L. (1985). Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hollander, S. (1989). Coping with child sexual abuse through books. Elementary School Guidance & Counseling, 28, 188.

Hollis, J. W., & Wantz, R. A. (1993). Counselor preparation 1993-1995. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.

Hopper, G., & Schroder, A. (1974). Direct observation of high school counselors' use of time. Journal of the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education, 12, 102-108.

Hoyt, K. B., Evans, R. N., Mackin, E. F., & Mangum, G. L. (1974). Career education: What is it and how to do it (2nd ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing.

Hutchinson, R. L., Barrick, A. L., & Groves, M. (1986). Functions of secondary school counselors in the public schools: Ideal and actual. The School Counselor, 34, 87-91.

Hutchinson, R. L., & Bottorff, R. L. (1986). Selected high school counseling services: Student assessment. The School Counselor, 33, 350-354.

Ibrahim, F. A., Helms, B. J., & Thompson, D. L. (1983). Counselor role and function: An appraisal by consumers and counselors. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 61, 597-601.

Ibrahim, F. A., & Thompson, D. L. (1982). Preparation of secondary school counselors: A national survey. Counselor Education and Supervision, 22, 113-122.

Jahoda, M., Deutsch, M., & Cook, S. (1951). Research methods in social relations (Part 1). New York: Dryden.

Janis, I. L., & Mann, L. (1977). Decision making: A psychological analysis of conflict, choice, and commitment. New York: Free Press.

Kaplan, L. S. (1995). Principals versus counselors: Resolving tensions from different practice models. The School Counselor, 42, 261-267.

Keat, D. B. (1974). Fundamentals of child counseling. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kegan, R. (1982). The evolving self. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kegan, R. (1991, June). Developmental approaches to professional development. Paper presented at the conference of the Clinical Developmental Institute, Cambridge, MA.

Kendrick, R., Chandler, J., & Hatcher, W. (1994). Job demands, stressors, and the school counselor. The School Counselor, 41, 365-369.

Kerr, S., VonGlinow, M. A., & Schriesheim, J. (1977). Issues in the study of "professionals" in organizations: The case of scientists and engineers. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 18, 329-345.

Ketterman, C. S. (1968). The opinion of selected publics concerning the school counselor's function. The School Counselor, 16, 41-45.

Killin, T. E., & Williams, R. L. (1995). Making a difference in school climate, counseling services, and student success. NASSP Bulletin, 79, 44-50.

Kirk, J., & Miller, M. (1986). Reliability, validity and qualitative research. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Knowles, R. R., & Shertzer, B. (1965). Attitudes toward the school counselor's role. Counselor Education and Supervision, 5, 9-20.

Krauskopf, C. J., Thoreson, R. W., & McAleer, C. A. (1972). Counseling psychology: The who, what, and where of our profession. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 20, 370-374.

Kuzmic, J. (1994). A beginning teacher's search for meaning: Teacher socialization, organizational literacy, and empowerment. Teaching & Teacher Education, 10, 15-27.

Lampe, R. E. (1985). Principals' training in counseling and development: A national survey. Counselor Education and Supervision, 25, 44-47.

Lawson, L. (1993). Theory of Work Adjustment personality constructs. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 43, 46-57.

LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1993). Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research (2nd ed.). San aggie, CA: Academic Press.

Lofland, J. (1971). Analyzing social settings. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Loganbill, C., Hardy, E., & Delworth, U. (1982). Supervision: A conceptual model. The Counseling Psychologist, 10, 3-42.

Lortie, D. (1965). Administrator, advocate, or therapist? Alternatives for professionalization. Harvard Educational Review, 35, 3-17.

Maccoby, E., & Maccoby, N. (1954). The interview: A tool of social science. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), Handbook of social psychology (vol. 1). Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1989). Designing qualitative research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Mathews, B., & Paradise, L. F. (1988). Toward methodological diversity: Qualitative research approaches. Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 10, 225-234.
- Matthes, W. A. (1992). Induction of counselors into the profession. The School Counselor, 39, 245-250.
- Mayer, R., Butterworth, T., Komoto, T., & Benoit, R. (1983). The influences of the school principal on the consultant's effectiveness. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 17, 274-279.
- McAuliffe, G. J. (1993). Constructive development and career transition: Implications for counseling. Journal of Counseling & Development, 72, 23-28.
- McCully, C. H. (1962). The school counselor: Strategy for professionalization. The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 40, 681-689.
- McCully, C. H., & Miller, L. L. (1969). Challenge for change in counselor education. Minneapolis, MN: Burgess Publishing.
- McGowen, K. R., & Hart, L. E. (1990). Still different after all these years: Gender differences in professional identity formation. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 21, 118-123.

Meglino, B. M., Ravlin, E. C., & Adkins, C. L. (1989). A work values approach to corporate culture: A field test of the value congruence process and its relationship to individual outcomes. Journal of Applied Psychology, 74, 424-432.

Meltzer, B., & Petras, J. (1970). The Chicago and Iowa schools of symbolic interactionism. In T. Shibutani (Ed.), Human nature and collective behavior. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Menacker, J. (1974). Vitalizing guidance in urban schools. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Company.

Menacker, J. (1976). Toward a theory of activist guidance. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 54, 318-321.

Merton, R. K., & Kendall, P. L. (1946). The focused interview. American Journal of Sociology, 51, 541-557.

Miller, D. W., & Starr, M. K. (1967). The structure of human decisions. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Moos, R. H. (1987). Person-environment congruence in work, school, and health care settings. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 31, 231-247.

Moracco, J. C., Butcke, P. G., & McEwen, M. K. (1984). Measuring stress in school counselors: Some research findings and implications. The School Counselor, 32, 110-118.

Moracco, J. C., & Gray, P. (1983, March). The COSI: Development of an instrument to assess stress in counselors. Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Personnel and Guidance Association, Washington, DC.

Morgan, L., & Trachtenbert, C. (1974). Bus token, lunch money, needle and thread: School guidance today? School Counselor, 21, 304-308.

Mosher, R. L., & Sprinthall, N.A. (1970). Psychological education in secondary schools: A program to promote individual and human development. American Psychologist, 25, 911-924.

Murray, B. A. (1995). Principals: Proponents of high school guidance programs. NASSP Bulletin, 79, 64-68.

Murray, H. A. (1938). Explorations in personality. New York: Oxford University Press.

Myers, J. E. (1995). Specialties in counseling: Rich heritage or force for fragmentation? Journal of Counseling & Development, 74, 115-116.

Myrick, R. D. (1993). Developmental guidance and counseling: A practical approach (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media.

National Board for Certified Counselors. (1995). Counselor certification 1995-1996: National certified school counselor information and application. Greensboro, NC: Author.

Neukrug, E. S., Barr, C. G., Hoffman, L. R., & Kaplan, L. S. (1993). developmental counseling and guidance: A model for use in your school. The School Counselor, 40, 356-362.

O'Bryant, B. J. (1991). Getting the most from your school counseling program. NASSP Bulletin, 75, 1-4.

Odell, L. M. (1973). Secondary school counseling: Past, present, and future. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 52, 151-155.

Olson, M. J. (1986). An appraisal of school counseling in Wisconsin, 1984-85 by counselors and consumer groups. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Olson, M. J., & Allen, D. N. (1993). Principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of school counselors with and without teaching experience. Counselor Education and Supervision, 33, 10-21.

Olson, M. J., & Dilley, J. S. (1988). A new look at stress and the school counselor. The School Counselor, 35, 194-198.

O'Reilly, C. A. (1983). The use of information in organizational decision making: A model and some propositions. Research in Organizational Behavior, 5, 103-139.

Paisley, P. O., & Borders, L. D. (1995). School counseling: An evolving specialty. Journal of Counseling & Development, 74, 150-153.



Paisley, P. O., & Hubbard, G. T. (1989). School counseling: State officials' perceptions of certification and employment trends. Counselor Education and Supervision, 29, 60-70.

Paisley, P. O., & Hubbard, G. T. (1994). Developmental school counseling programs: From theory to practice. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Parsons, F. (1909). Choosing a vocation. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Partin, R. L. (1993). School counselors' time: Where does it go? The School Counselor, 40, 274-281.

Patton, M. J., & Jackson, A. P. (1991). Theory and meaning in counseling research: Comment on Strong (1991). Journal of Counseling Psychology, 38, 214-216.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Peer, G. G. (1985). The status of secondary school guidance: A national survey. The School Counselor, 32, 181-189.

Peters, D. (1962). The practice of counseling in the secondary schools. The status of guidance and counseling in the nation's schools. Washington, DC: ACA Press.

Podemski, R. S., & Childers, J. H. (1982). Psychological contracting for the counselor's role: Procedures for counselors and principals. The School Counselor, 29, 183-189.

Podemski, R. S., & Childers, J. H. (1987). The school counselor's role: Reexamination and revitalization. Planning and Changing, 18, 17-22.

Ponzo, Z. (1989). Beyond role debate to role interpretation. The School Counselor, 37, 5-6.

Proctor, W. (1925). Educational and vocational guidance: A consideration of guidance as it related to all of the essential activities of life. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Punch, M. (1986). The politics and ethics of fieldwork. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Reising, G. N., & Daniels, M. H. (1983). A study of Hogan's model of counselor development and supervision. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 30, 235-244.

Rockwell, P. J., & Rothney, J. W. (1961). Some ideas of pioneers in the guidance movement. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 11, 349.

Rogers, C. R. (1942). Counseling and psychotherapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

- Rogers, C. R. (1951). Client-centered therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rogers, C. R. (1961). On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rosenbloom, S. (1992). The development of the work ego in the beginning analyst: Thoughts on identity formation of the psychoanalyst. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 73, 117-126.
- Salmon, V. R. (1985). Pupil services. In J. S. Kaiser, The principalship (pp. 179-212). Minneapolis, MN: Burgess.
- Schmidt, J. J. (1984). School counseling: Professional directions for the future. The School Counselor, 31, 385-392.
- Schmidt, L. D. (1962). Concepts of the role of secondary school counselors. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 40, 600-605.
- Schoen, L. G. (1989). In search of a professional identity: Counseling psychology in Australia. The Counseling Psychologist, 17, 332-343.
- Sears, S. J., & Navin, S. L. (1983). Stressors in school counseling. Education, 103, 333-337.
- Selye, H. (1966). The stress of life. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Shaw, M. C. (1973). School guidance systems. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Shertzer, B., & Stone, S. (1963). The school counselor and his publics: A problem in role definition. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 41, 687-693.

Simon, H. A. (1976). Administrative behavior: A study of decision making processes in administrative organizations (3rd ed.). New York: Free Press.

Skovholt, T. M., & Ronnestad, M. H. (1992). Themes in therapist and counselor development. Journal of Counseling & Development, 70, 505-515.

Smart, J. C., Elton, C. F., & McLaughlin, G. W. (1986). Person-environment congruence and job satisfaction. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 29, 216-225.

Smith, G. E. (1955). Counseling in the secondary school. New York: Macmillan.

Splete, H. H., & Grisdale, G. A. (1992). The Oakland Counselor Academy: A professional development program for school counselors. The School Counselor, 39, 176-182.

Stack, W. B. (1977). The school counselor: Role conflict. The Clearing House, 50(8), 341-344.

Staessens, K. (1993). Identification and description of professional culture in innovating schools. Qualitative Studies in Education, 6, 111-128.

Stanciak, L. A. (1995). Reforming the high school counselor's role: A look at developmental guidance. NASSP Bulletin, 79, 60-63.

Stickel, S. A. (1992, March). Role perceptions of the rural school counselor: A factor analysis. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Hilton Head, SC.

Stoltenberg, C. (1981). Approaching supervision from a developmental perspective: The counselor complexity model. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28, 59-65.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Strong, S. R. (1991). Science in counseling psychology: Reply to Gelso (1991) and Patton and Jackson (1991). Journal of Counseling Psychology, 38, 217-218.

Sweeney, T. J. (1995). Accreditation, credentialing, professionalization: The role of specialties. Journal of Counseling & Development, 74, 117-125.

Swisher, J. D. (1970). Counselors in conflict. The School Counselor, 17, 272-279.

Takanishi, R. (1993). The opportunities of adolescence—research, interventions, and policy. American Psychologist, 48, 85-87.

Tennyson, W. W. (1958). Time: The counselor's dilemma! Personnel and Guidance Journal, 37, 129-135.

Tennyson, W. W., Miller, G. D., Skovholt, T. M., & Williams, R. C. (1989). How they view their role: A survey of counselors in different secondary schools. Journal of Counseling & Development, 67, 399-403.

Thompson, R. (1992). School counseling renewal: Strategies for the twenty-first century. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.

Tooker, E. D. (1957). Counselor role: Counselor training. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 36, 263-267.

Tversky, A. (1972). Elimination by aspects: A theory of choice. Psychological Review, 79, 281-299.

Tversky, A., & Kahnemann, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty. Science, 185, 1124-1130.

U. S. Census. (1995). Statistical abstract of the United States: 1995, September 1995 (115th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Vacc, N. A., Bloss-Snyder, K., & Martin-Rainey, L. (1993). Multidisciplinary teams: The school counselor and other professionals. In J. Wittmer (Ed.), Managing your school counseling program: K-12 developmental strategies (pp. 201-211). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media.

Vacc, N. A., & Loesch, L. C. (1987). Counseling as a profession. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.

Valine, W. J., Higgins, E. B., & Hatcher, R. B. (1982). Teacher attitudes toward the role of the counselor: An eight-year follow-up study. The School Counselor, 29, 208-211.

VanZandt, C. E., & Perry N. S. (1992). Helping the rookie school counselor: A mentoring project. The School Counselor, 39, 158-163.

Watts, R. (1987). Development of professional identity in Black clinical psychology students. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 18, 28-35.

Welch, I. D., & McCarroll, L. (1993). The future role of school counselors. The School Counselor, 41, 48-53.

Wells, C. E., & Ritter, K. Y. (1979). Paperwork, pressure, and discouragement: Students' attitudes toward guidance services and implications for the profession. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 58, 175-179.

Whyte, W. F. (1984). Learning from the field. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Whyte, W. H. (1979). On making the most of participant observation. The American Sociologist, 14, 56-66.

Wilensky, H. L. (1964). The professionalization of everyone? The American Journal of Sociology, 70, 137-158.

Wilgus, E., & Shelley, V. (1988). The role of the elementary-school counselor: Teacher perceptions, expectations, and actual functions. The School Counselor, 35, 259-266.

Williamson, E. G. (1950). Counseling adolescents. New York: McGraw Hill.

Wittmer, J. (1993) Implementing a comprehensive developmental school counseling program. In J. Wittmer (Ed.), Managing your school counseling program: K-12 developmental strategies (pp. 12-30). Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media.

Wolf, R. L. (1979, April). An overview of conceptual and methodological issues in naturalistic evaluation. Paper presented at the meeting of American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Wrenn, C. G. (1957). Status and role of the school counselor. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 36, 175-183.

Wrenn, C. G. (1962). The counselor in a changing world. Washington, DC: American Personnel and Guidance Association.

Zaccaria, J. (1969). Approaches to guidance in contemporary education. Scranton, PA: International Textbook Company.

Zey, M. (Ed.). (1992). Decision making: Alternatives to rational choice models. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.



**Appendix A: Interview Guide**

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What factors determine the school counseling program?
2. Who is involved in determining the school counseling program?
3. How do you make decisions about the school counseling program?
4. What issues of conflict with principals have you dealt with as a school counselor?
5. What was the conflict decision process you used when dealing with conflicts with principals?
6. In what ways do your conflict decisions reflect your role as a school counselor?

**Appendix B: Participant Questionnaire**



**Appendix C: Consent to Act as a Human Subject**

**CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN SUBJECT**

Project Title: Interactions with Principals as Defining Experiences in the Development of Professional School Counselors' Identity

Principal Investigator: Pamelia E. Brott, M.A., LPC

Subject's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Consent \_\_\_\_\_

Ms. Pamelia E. Brott is a doctoral student in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She is researching the development of a professional school counselor identity by interviewing practicing school counselors. The research study will increase our awareness and understanding by describing the school counselors' interactions with principals as defining experiences in the development of a professional identity.

I understand that there are no discomforts or possible hazards involved in the study for me. My participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and I am free to withdraw consent and discontinue my participation at any time.

I realize that the study will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes of my time. It will involve participating in an interview and filling out a brief questionnaire.

The research and this consent form have been approved by the Institutional Review Board at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro which insures that research involving people follows federal regulations. Questions regarding my rights as a participant in this project can be answered by calling Dr. Beverly Maddox-Britt at (910) 334-5878. Questions regarding the research itself will be answered by Ms. Pamelia E. Brott by calling (910) 545-0693. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided to me if the information might affect my willingness to continue participation in the project.

By signing this form, I agree to participate in the project described. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name is not used.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness to Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date